

This number contains two of the \$2,600 Prize Stories.

WILLIS A. BOUGHTON

APR 28 1926

The Black Cat



5
CENTS

July 1897.

For Dear Old Yale
\$300 Prize Story
James Langston

The Casket of Pandora
Margaret Dodge

A Romance of the Palisades
E. O. Weeks

A Postponed Arrest
Leland Ingersoll

A Geometrical Design
\$100 Prize Story
Mary Foote Arnold

Copyright, 1897, by The Shortstory Publishing Co.

THE SHORTSTORY PUBLISHING CO., 144 HIGH ST. BOSTON, MASS.

Copyright, 1897, by The Shortstory Publishing Co.

Thick Thin—
any kind of
STOCKINGS
are all the same to

The
Velvet Grip
CUSHION
BUTTON
HOSE SUPPORTER



NO SLIPPING OR TEARING
Sold Everywhere

Sample Pair by mail. 25c Stamps.
CATALOGUE FREE

PO Box 1004 GEORGE FROST & CO. BOSTON, MASS



**BURNETT'S
COCOINE**

For the Hair.

Absolute Cure for Dandruff. Soothes all Irritation of the Scalp. The only preparation that makes the hair grow by nourishing the roots. Price, 50c. and \$1.00 per bottle.

JOSEPH BURNETT CO.,
36 India Street, Boston, Mass.

Send your address for our pamphlet on the Hair, its care and management.

EVERY TABLET
OF
PEARS' SOAP

is kept at least twelve months before it is sold. This can be said of no other Soap in the world, and good soap, like good wine, improves with age.

You may keep Pears' Soap for twenty years in any climate, and it will never shrink. Every tablet will retain its original shape and every ball remain a perfect sphere—proof positive that there is no shrinkage, and that they are old and well matured.

Unequaled for Toilet, Nursery, and Bath.

Pears' 100 years old and better than it ever was. Pears'

Be sure you get Pears'.
Used everywhere—Sold everywhere.
Try Pears' Shaving Stick.

Annual Sales Over 6,000,000 Boxes!

BEECHAM'S PILLS

For Bilious and Nervous disorders such as Wind and Pain in the Stomach, Sick Headache, Giddiness, Fulness and Swelling after meals, Dizziness and Drowsiness, Flushings of Heat, Loss of Appetite, Costiveness, Blotches on the Skin, etc. **The First Dose will give Relief in Twenty Minutes.** Every sufferer will acknowledge them to be

A Wonderful Medicine!

They quickly restore females to complete health, because they promptly remove obstructions or irregularities of the system.

For a
Weak Stomach,
Impaired Digestion,
Disordered Liver,
they act like magic and are positively

Without a Rival!

25 cts. at Drug Stores. Or postpaid of B.F. ALLEN CO., 365 Canal St., New York.

Book Free Upon Application.

The Black Cat

A Monthly Magazine of Original Short Stories.

Copyright, 1897, by The Shortstory Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

No. 22.

JULY, 1897.

5 cents a copy.
50 cents a year.

Entered at the Post-Office at Boston, Mass., as second-class matter.

IMPORTANT.—The entire contents of this magazine are covered by copyright and publishers everywhere are cautioned against reproducing any of the stories, either wholly or in part.

For Dear Old Yale.*

BY JAMES LANGSTON.



IN a hundred towns along the upper waters of the Euphrates was sounding the steady lu-lu-lu of fanatical hordes slaughtering Christians. The Kurds were abroad, with battle cries of Islam on their lips, and the mercy of tigers in their hearts. The Turkish soldiery looked on stolidly at the butchery, sometimes helping it, though vowing with much talk that they were out for the defense. The Armenians simply died, as is their way, sometimes by tens, sometimes by thousands.

At the mission station five miles from Harput some Christians of a different type were gathered,—fighting Christians, who knew the uses of soap and gunpowder, and had a flag worth talking about to protect them, a flag with stripes on it and stars, that has been heard of in the world. Still this flag was far away and the Kurds were near.

There were men here and women, sheltered in a stone house with a stone wall around it, built by Ohio Presbyterians to show people who wear turbans how people who wear pot hats do such

*This story received the third prize, of \$300, in THE BLACK CAT prize competition, which closed March 31, 1897.

things as preaching and decimal fractions. The women in the house were sure there was no danger ; the men, excepting Professor Peabody, knew they would be lucky if they were not massacred to the last mother's child.

Gathered here in this mission station, and well content to have the stone wall around them, and shooting tackle within, were some twenty-five souls, six of them Americans, the rest natives of one breed or another who had accepted the story of Jesus and were suffering for it. There were half a dozen students from the Euphrates College, now a pile of smoldering ruins in Harput, earnest-eyed young men, who had fled from death with their Bibles and flowing trousers and their small black fezes. There were some Armenian girls and women, beautiful submissive creatures, born to be bought and sold, to suffer and die. There were three American ladies, two of them teachers from Constantinople, and one the wife of Father Asdadur, as he was called, the finest old missionary in all Asia Minor, and in charge of the station. Then there were two newly arrived missionaries, one with his bride, who had come from New England in service of the Board, and were pushing on to the East and wondering how far they would get. Finally, there was a man from Chicago who told "funny" stories and had great enterprise. He was a rug merchant who had journeyed inland for bargains in Daghestans and Cashmeres, and heartily wished he had stuck to the seaport bazaars.

Beyond doubt, the most learned member of this handful of Christians, and yet the most unwise, was Professor Walter Lathrop Sheffield Peabody (to give him all his names), a very famous man, whom Yale University had sent out to oversee some archæological excavations in the valley of the Euphrates. This they had done because Professor Peabody understood archæology as well as sociology, and Greek, and many other things. Indeed, he was Yale's bright, particular star, one of those men who are irritatingly brilliant. He had a wonderful memory, he was a wonderful whist player, he was a wonderful conversationalist, in fact he was fitted for nearly everything except dealing with Xei-beck chieftains, who, between you and me, care no more for a New Haven lion than they do for a Persian cat. The professor's folly had come on this very morning when he had fired a rifle

shot at a group of horsemen passing in the distance. To understand why he did this takes us back to the week before, when the company inside the mission walls had defended themselves as best they could, and fortunately with success, against some Kurdish stragglers who had conceived it a pleasant pastime to loot the place and kill the people in it, at least the men. And in this skirmish the versatile professor had come off less gloriously than was his wont; indeed, to tell plain truth, when he heard the bullets pattering about and the cries of the marauders, he had gone back into one of the inner rooms — and stayed there.

Fortunately the affair had turned out all right, thanks mainly to the lion fighting of young Eli Morris, a protégé of Peabody's and a notable in his own way at Yale, where it was said that no man had ever passed him on the football field, and no man had ever failed to pass him in the class room. Eli was on this archæological business because his father, who was rich, thought that a year or so abroad with Professor Peabody would do the boy worlds of good and incidentally keep him out of mischief. Not that Eli needed watching, for a finer fellow than he never took a Yale A. B. and marveled when he got it. And no dog ever loved its master better than he loved the professor; there was something pathetic in his attitude of humility toward this resplendent man of learning, in whom he saw everything that was good and great, while he, well, he was only Eli Morris. Yet, in this business with the Kurds the professor had been unmistakably nervous, while Eli was down at the gate treating the screaming devils as if they were some scrub eleven trying to score against the 'Varsity.

And the memory of this rankled in Peabody's mind, for he had the habit of excelling all men in all things, and it was bitter to his self-esteem to have a man who had been dropped through two or three classes outshine him in a time of crisis. So, on this day, when he espied some horsemen passing in the distance, he picked up his rifle very quietly and, before any one could stop him, fired a chance shot at long range. He would show these people that he was on the alert for danger, and, if he happened to hit any one, why, so much the better. This might not have been such a bad idea, at least no harm would have come of it, if the horsemen had been Kurds, as the professor supposed. But it chanced that they

were a Xeibeck band, the fiercest and most lawless tribe in all Kurdistan, and they cared neither for God nor Sultan, and boasted that they cut down Mussulmans and Christians with equal delight. This was the target Professor Peabody had chosen for the display of his marksmanship and the bolstering up of his pride.

“You don’t think you hit any one, do you, professor?” asked Father Asdadur anxiously.

“I don’t know,” answered the professor; “I adjusted my globe sight very carefully, and am usually a fair judge of distance.” He spoke as if his skill of the hand was alone in question, and took the same tone he would have used in arguing about a cut-stroke in tennis. “If we must fight anyhow, we may as well take the aggressive,” he continued; but he did not exactly mean this, he simply objected to the old missionary’s manner. The old missionary, however, had lived along the upper waters of the Euphrates for over fifteen years. He had seen Xeibecks before.

“God help us,” he muttered, “if he did hit one of them.”

All through the afternoon stragglers reached the station, the weak flying from the strong, and some of them were wounded, and all brought tales of horror, — of houses burned, of stores pillaged, of people killed and outraged. About sundown, while the ladies were dressing for dinner, there came to the house a messenger, a huge, bearded man, with cunning, squint eyes set in the face of a patriarch, and he talked for awhile to Father Asdadur in a sing-song voice, and then went away. When the missionary came in his face looked graver than usual, and he took Morris aside and told him that which made him look grave, too.

“We will call the men together after dinner,” said Father Asdadur, “and give them the sheikh’s message.”

“Wait till the evening’s over,” said Eli; “the ladies have arranged some games and things.”

Meantime Professor Peabody was pointing out to the ladies, in his happiest way, the picturesque points in the messenger’s costume, — his gaudily embroidered garment of skin, his knotted turban, his queer leggings and trousers, — and was arguing with the rug man as to whether he was a Kurd or not.

“Was that fellow a Kurd, Father Asdadur?” he asked, when the man had gone.

“No, he was a Xeibeck.”

“There, I was sure of it. You see, I have made a careful study of these tribal characteristics.”

The evening passed delightfully, so the ladies declared, and Professor Peabody was the soul of the occasion. He was charming in serious talk, forceful in argument, abundant in epigram and clever mots, and even condescended to old-fashioned conundrums for the delectation of the Constantinople teachers, who, having spent their lives away from New Haven, had never heard a ramrod described as “my first is a kind of butter, my second a kind of liquor, and my whole a part of a gun,” and other brilliant riddles of the sort. And then they sang college songs and plantation melodies, and one of the ladies made much fun of Eli’s bass, which, she declared, invariably went up when it should have gone down, and *vice versa*. Indeed, Eli made a poor enough showing except when the professor got him to tell how, on a certain Thanksgiving day, when he was playing right tackle for Yale, he bucked his way through Princeton’s whole rush line and made sixty yards for a touch-down, thus saving the game. But the story was half spoiled in the telling, for he jumbled it all together and failed to make impressive pauses, as good storytellers do. The professor would have been much better — at telling the story.

“What a pity Mr. Morris hasn’t more brains,” whispered one of the school teachers to Professor Peabody.

“Ah, but he has a good heart!” said the professor complacently.

“And he is so handsome and brave, isn’t he?”

“Ye-es, I suppose he is,” said Peabody, less complacent now.

After it was all over and the ladies had rustled away to bed, Father Asdadur brought the men together around a table on which were things to smoke. Then he announced very quietly that the Xeibeck sheikh had sent word that his band would attack the mission station at sunrise unless a white Christian, one of their number, be delivered over to be shot.

At this there were exclamations from all the men except Morris, who, as he knew it all beforehand, merely sat still with his long legs crossed, and puffed away at his pipe.

“This is an outrage, it is infamous!” said Professor Peabody,

and was launching into a pretty speech when the old missionary interrupted: "This is a country, sir, of outrages and infamy."

"But we are American citizens; the Sultan must protect us."

"The Sultan is powerless, and four days' marching could scarcely bring troops here. The Xeibecks will be at our gates when the sun comes up; they keep their appointments."

"But there must be some way of reasoning with this sheikh; we can make it worth his while, let him name a ransom."

Father Asdadur shook his head. "You do not know the Xeibecks. They come out of the mountains east of Smyrna, they live on bread and olives, and sleep in black tents. What would they do with your ransom? They want but one thing, blood for blood. One of their men was killed by one of our bullets; they insist that one of our men shall be killed by one of theirs."

All eyes were fixed on the professor, who stirred uneasily.

"Gentlemen," said he, after a troubled pause, "I suppose I am responsible for this catastrophe. I probably fired the shot —"

"Not so sure about that," put in Morris. "I popped away at our friends two or three times, myself, this afternoon."

Every man in the room, with one possible exception, felt that this statement was false, and knew also why Morris had made it. Perhaps the professor thought it was true; at any rate, he made no sign. "Yes," went on Eli in a matter-of-fact tone, "I thought maybe it would scare 'em away to see we were not afraid."

"Exactly my idea," said the professor, "Why can't we defend ourselves the way we — way we — did the other day?"

The professor flushed as he remembered that other day.

"My friends," said Father Asdadur, with deep impressiveness, "I've lived in this region a long time, and understand its ways. In my time I have seen massacres. I saw Heghgate burned, and the butcheries of Erzurum. My mother and my two sisters were killed at Hedink, my uncle and four cousins were killed at Trebizond. I know whereof I speak! The Xeibecks are the fiercest fighters in Syria, and they outnumber us ten to one. We might hold out against them an hour or two, not longer. After that you know what will happen." He glanced toward the stairway, whence the sound of laughter and women's talk floated down. Each man looked his neighbor in the eyes; they understood.

“This is horrible!” exclaimed one of the younger missionaries, a pale-faced graduate of a theological seminary, who had come out only the year before. His wife was one of the women upstairs.

“See here,” said Morris abruptly, putting down his pipe, “there’s no use trying to dodge this thing; there are twenty-five people here to be saved, and one of us six has got to do it.” There was such conviction in his tone that the others felt the uselessness of further talk; even Professor Peabody was silent.

It is an interesting time when six men sit down together to agree calmly which one of them shall stop living. It was now one o’clock in the morning, the sun rose at five, they had four hours in which to decide. One of them had four hours to live.

“Do you all accept the sheikh’s terms?” asked Father Asdadur after a long pause.

One after another the men accepted.

“Then I propose that we make the choice by lot.”

There was another long silence.

“Gentlemen,” said Morris, blowing out clouds of smoke, “I’ve been thinking of something. I believe I know why I was sent to this God-forsaken country. I never did know until now. I think I’m the man to meet these beggars in the morning. I don’t see any sense in drawing lots. Look at it sensibly, now; you five men are all doing something worth while, helping somebody, making the world better. I’ve never done a thing except give the governor trouble, and blow in his money, and get dropped and suspended, and get myself laughed at, and —and ” (with a gulp) “kick football a little. Besides that, you’re married men with families, but it don’t matter a hang about me. So you’ll please consider me nominated for this business in the morning.”

It is doubtful if, in all his life, Eli had ever made so long a speech as this; it is certain he had never made such an impression. Father Asdadur reached across the table and clasped the young man’s strong white hand in his brown, bony one.

“God bless you, my son,” he said; “you have a brave heart, but the thing is impossible, quite impossible.”

And all the others said it was impossible, too. What else could they say? So they came back to the lot-drawing idea, and the rug man proposed that cards should point the finger of fate.

"I never played cards in my life," said Father Asdadur.

"Neither did I," said one of the missionaries, but the other admitted having learned poker in his young manhood.

"Let it be poker, then," said the rug man, "cold hands with a draw. I'll show you in a jiffy. Look here, I deal you each five cards, like that;" — he produced a pack of cards from somewhere and began to shuffle them, — "understand, you have the privilege of drawing once, and the lowest hand loses."

Then, with the cards lying face upward on the table, he explained to the two beginners the value of a pair, two pairs, three of a kind, and so on, — the ordinary hands of draw poker. The others looked on indifferently; after all, as well a choice by cards as any other means. When the two missionaries had learned their lesson, the man from Chicago said: "Now, if you've got that in your heads, we will play in earnest. First jack deals."

And he dealt until a jack fell before Father Asdadur.

"Shall we let one deal settle it?" asked Morris.

"Why not have it this way," suggested the professor, never lacking in a happy suggestion, "why not have the high man drop out after each deal and leave the others to fight it out? Then the choice will come between the two left in at the last."

This modification was agreed to, and Father Asdadur dealt the first hand, dealt it in silence, and his very clumsiness added to the tension. The six men studied their cards, threw down their discards, called for the number they wanted, and then declared what they had. It was absolute chance disposing of a life. The man from Chicago had three kings and went out; he was safe. In the next round, Father Asdadur found fortune and went out in his turn. Then one after another the young missionaries held the highest hand, and so escaped the danger. The last hand came between Morris and Professor Peabody. Morris dealt.

"One card," said the professor, and his lips were dry.

"I'll take one," said Morris.

Both men discarded a single card, picked up a single card, and then slowly looked at it.

"Aces up," said the professor.

"I drew for a flush," said Morris, with a huskiness in his voice, "and — I didn't fill."

He threw down his cards, and for a moment no one spoke.

"It's all right," said Eli, "fate understands these things. I told you I was the man to go."

That broke the spell, and the others crowded about him with show of sympathy. No doubt they were sorry for him; no doubt they were not sorry for themselves. How do men feel on a raft when one of their number has been chosen to go overboard to save the rest? That's the way they felt. No one could sleep and no one tried to sleep. The rug man from Chicago paced up and down in front of the house, the assistant missionaries talked together in low tones on the veranda, and Professor Peabody gave Father Asdadur some meaty ideas on the proper way to deal with the heathen. Morris wrote letters to his family and one to a girl.

About half an hour before sunrise sounds from the upper regions warned them that the ladies were dressing. There was some excursion planning, no doubt, and their laughter and gay talk showed that they were in the best of humors.

"Hello!" said Morris, "we'll have the women folks down here in a minute," and then going quickly to the others, he charged them on no account to let the ladies know. "I'm glad they're coming down, though," he said to himself; "it's good to have an American girl or two around."

A little later there was an invasion from above, the ladies fresh in their cool morning gowns, and some of them pretty. Coffee was served with a light meal, and just as the sun was rising, Morris stood up and asked the company to sing "Here's to Good Old Yale." At this the men came up like soldiers on parade, and the women rose, too, yielding to an influence they did not understand, and they all sang the old song as perhaps it had never been sung before, certainly not in Kurdistan. While in the center of the group, with lifted coffee-pot, stood Morris, towering half a head over every one, and singing his home-made bass with all the power that was in him, his eyes flashing wondrously.

"There are Eli's fine old discords again," said one of the girls, giggling, and was surprised that the men did not laugh.

Suddenly there came the sound of marching feet outside. A hoarse command rang out and gun butts grounded on the gravel. The ladies rushed to the window.

"It's some of those horrid Kurds!" cried one.

Then the ladies joined in laughing at the queer uniforms and the ugly faces. Morris, meantime, unobserved, had shaken hands with the other men.

Father Asdadur rose hastily and went to the front of the house. As he went out Eli exchanged glances with him.

"You ladies stay here," he said; "I'll go out and see what it is."

The other men followed after and stood about awkwardly. The sheikh came forward with a fine dignity of presence and said something in his native tongue. Father Asdadur replied, and then there was parleying.

"Make them understand," said Professor Peabody, "that I represent one of the greatest institutions in the United States, and can promise them anything they desire."

"The sheikh says that he has never heard of the United States," said Father Asdadur, translating; "he says he has given his terms and has come for an answer."

"But tell him, for God's sake, make him understand, that this young man comes of fine family, that his father is very rich, that — that — that he has been entrusted to my keeping."

"The sheikh says that the young man of their band who was killed from here had a father and mother, too."

"Don't bother about it any more," said Eli, touching the professor's arm; "it isn't much, anyhow." And he stepped forward with just the same unflinching look in his eyes he had shown in the old days when summoned before the faculty.

"But," cried the professor, stepping forward, "who can say that the bullet which killed this poor warrior came from here?"

The sheikh turned to one of his followers, who opened a leathern pouch and drew something from it.

"The sheikh presents you the bullet with his compliments, and says that it comes from a rifle the like of which does not exist in all Kurdistan. He speaks the truth, this is a bullet from a Martini rifle; yours is the only rifle it could come from." Then he added very slowly, "I congratulate you, professor, on your marksmanship."

By this time the Xeibecks were plainly growing impatient and motioned that they would wait no longer.

“Good-by, professor,” said Eli, head high, but eyes saying things. Then hesitating: “You know it’s all — all — for ‘Dear Old Yale,’” and he gripped the professor’s well-shaped hand in an athlete’s squeeze.

“Where are you going, Mr. Morris?” asked one of the girls from one of the windows.

“Oh, just to see these fellows do some musket practise,” said Eli lightly.

“Look!” exclaimed another, “they’re taking him by the arms! Why, they’re leading him off like a prisoner!”

“Don’t be alarmed,” called Eli, “it’s just a joke. Say, ladies, friends, professor, let’s give it to ’em once again, the old song. And he himself struck up: —

“Here’s to good old Yale, drink her down,
Here’s to good old Yale, drink her down,
Here’s to good old Yale,
She’s so hearty and so hale,
Drink her down, drink her down, drink her down, down, down.”

And he kept on singing while three barbarians, who knew no more of Yale than they did of mercy, formed on either side of him and started at the word of command.

As the sun came over the hills, lighting up the glories of the Euphrates valley, this little company of Christians, far from their homes, stood on the piazza and watched the departing group, while their voices sounded out in the dear old words. And while they sang the Xeibeck band marched slowly up the slope, until the last thing seen of Eli was his figure outlined on the hilltop in the red sunshine, while his voice came down faintly to his friends in the chorus that has been sung by the brave men of many brave classes, and will be sung as long as Yale endures: —

“Balm of Gilead, Gilead,
Balm of Gilead, Gilead,
We won’t go there any more, we won’t go there any more.”

“Why, how queer you men look,” said the wife of the young missionary; “what’s the matter?”

Just then the sound of shots came over the hill and echoed away in the distance.

“They’re shooting already,” said one of the Constantinople teachers.

“Yes,” said Father Asdadur, his eyes resting tenderly on the hilltop, “they’re shooting.”

“Good God,” said Professor Peabody to himself, “this is awful;” and then he told the truth.

“O girls,” came a voice from within, “see here, I do believe these men have been playing poker! Think of that at a mission station! Just look at this table!”

Mrs. Asdadur was speaking, and the ladies hurried to her call. The men followed after them.

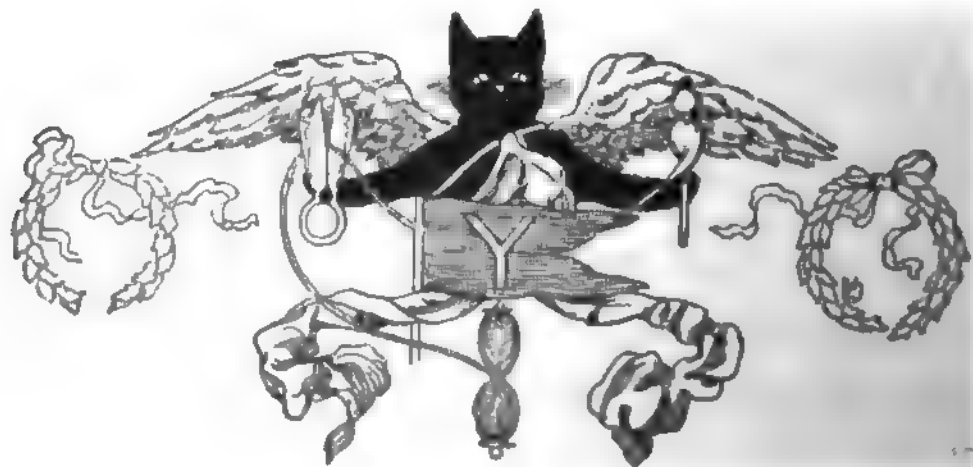
“This is a good hand, isn’t it, professor,” she said, picking up five cards that lay on top of the others. Rather absently Professor Peabody looked over her shoulder, then started back, with knitting brows. The cards lay on the table just as they had been thrown down after that last fateful deal. He picked up the five cards lying next. It was his hand, two aces, two eight spots, and a jack, — no danger of his forgetting that.

Turning to the other men, he said: “Morris drew for a flush, didn’t he?”

“Yes, poor chap,” said the rug man. “Don’t you remember he threw down when he didn’t fill?”

“I remember,” said the professor, and was silent for a full half minute, and his face became very white. Then he said, with a look in his eyes no one had ever seen there, “Gentlemen, this is Morris’s hand; he did fill.”

And at that moment Professor Walter Lathrop Sheffield Peabody (to give him all his names again) understood that Yale University had turned out a bigger man than he.



The Casket of Pandora.

BY MARGARET DODGE.



It stood in a cobwebbed corner, in the garret of a suburban villa, — a huge zinc and wood trunk, scarred, and dented, and covered with varicolored labels. Across its top was painted in bold, white, straggling letters the word THEATER — with the effect of a child's printing on a slate. It gave forth, when opened, an odor indescribable, half sickening, — the odor of stale "make-up," the odor theatrical of grease paint and powder that hangs around oft-used stage gowns and properties. It was, in short, a wardrobe trunk, and one that had seen hard service.

To the woman who knelt there in the mellow light of the October afternoon the old trunk was more than mere zinc and wood. It was the conjurer's box, out of which memory, the magician, evoked scenes and figures many colored, ever shifting, incredible, — the scenes of that life of the theater that to-day seemed as far from her own as though it had been seven centuries instead of seven years since her first season on the stage. Ah, that first season! The lips of the kneeling woman curved into a tender scorn at the memory of it, — at the memory of that year when her other self had played milkmaids, marchionesses, — what not? — in a Western repertoire company, and when the glamour of youth and boundless ambition had gilded even the dingy dressing rooms of county seat "opera houses." It was in one of the dingiest of these, she remembered, — a room where she was nightly jostled by the four other women of the company, and put off with the awkwardest corner, the poorest light, and the roughest board shelf that ever did duty for a dressing table, — it was here that her trunk had first reached her, — new and shiny, and stamped with the hall mark of a well-known theatrical trunk maker. And because that special night she had, in her zeal of the

novice, arrived at least an hour ahead of the earliest of her companions, she had beguiled the property man into painting on its lid that significant legend; — a task which the big unkempt fellow had performed to the tune of such glowing prophecies of days when her trunk should “go to the star dressing rooms in the toniest theaters,” as had sent her into a seventh heaven of theatrical beatitude. In that hour she had forgotten the sordid details of her surroundings, — the whitewashed walls covered with scrawling penciled initials, burnt match marks, and torn red and yellow playbills, — had forgotten the flat, drab little towns of their route, the insistent drolleries of the Heavy Man, the depressing menus of flyspecked hostelries; forgotten even the long “jumps” that sent the company once a week stumbling down unlighted, unpaved streets to untimely train takings; forgotten everything, in fact, except the ardors and ambitions of this incongruous, topsy-turvy, yet passionately loved world behind the scenes.

“Ah —”

The sound came from lips that no longer curved scornfully. She shivered a little, that woman who knelt there in the afternoon sunlight, and brushed one hand across her forehead like one not sure of her own identity. It was all such worlds away from her life of to-day. And yet, once all those feelings had been hers, — and more: — the hard-worked-for promotion of the two years following, the dizzy delight of that night when a Chicago manager, visiting an Indiana river-port, had seen her play and had called her up higher to a position as leading lady in his new drama; the exultations and depressions of his months of tutelage; and then that Chicago first night, flowers, ovations, thunderous applause, the never-to-be-forgotten look of a thousand faces upturned to hers.

The woman’s blue eyes were fixed now in a somnambulic stare; her lips parted, smiling, as little by little the search-light of memory illumined every detail of that performance, even to the opera cloak — a wonderful affair of sapphire-blue velvet lined with ermine — that she had worn in her great scene. The pivot of the play, her manager had called the garment, and indeed, what with being put on and off, laid across a chair-back in the

firelight as a background for her dark head and proud shoulders, and finally folded around her as she strayed out into a stage snow-storm, it had played an almost human part. But she knew and he knew the exultation his words covered.

“This is only the beginning,” he had said, the next afternoon, as he called at her hotel sitting room, noted the bouquets that banked her mantelpiece, and reread the flattering notices in the newspapers.

Only the beginning!

The woman who knelt in the glow of the October sunset looked down at the sapphire-blue cloak where it lay, camphor-scented, wrinkled, its folds undisturbed these four years past. She looked around at the attic storeroom, with its cedar chests, its rows of red chintz piece bags, its atmosphere of housewifely care. She rose, and walking to the window, let her eyes wander over the neat lawn, the immaculate gravel path and trim nasturtium beds, and then to the little Queen Anne villa opposite, whose irregular porticoes, golden-brown gables, and crisp, white muslin curtains, reproduced the house she lived in like the image in a looking-glass. The image of a happy home, she told herself, as she, in her soft gray house gown with its spotless collar and cuffs, was the picture of a happy matron. And in truth, she had been very happy in that pretty home and its placid, sheltered life, — so happy that only the evening before, sitting silently with her husband in the twilight, she had laughed softly at the memory of her manager’s bitter prophecy at parting four years ago, — his prediction of the vain regret she would one day feel for the career she had, as he put it, “thrown over for a passing fancy.” To-day, too, she laughed at the memory — but with a difference; for now her accent was all that of the stage world; and suddenly the laughter broke into sobs, and the happy woman’s dark head drooped upon her heaving breast.

As she raised both hands to brush away the tears, a bit of paper fell from her unconsciously clenched fingers into the open trunk tray before her. It was the letter that had brought her to this long-forgotten corner. Through the mist over her eyes she re-read the words as through the veil: —

My dear pupil: — Four years ago, you thought the world well lost for love, and flung away success — yours and mine — as a child might a half-eaten apple.

At the time I was unnecessarily angered at what I termed your desertion. But my feeling for my favorite pupil has outlived anger.

Besides, I know you. I know that long before this your artist nature must have triumphed. It is always so. You may give up the stage; it never gives up you. You may fancy that you have forgotten it; but one day, like Pandora in the old Greck legend, you open the forbidden casket—and, presto! the spirits of your past existence are alive and possess you.

Why do I write this? Because I need you,—you, who alone can understand my ideas. Because I have a new play,—whose leading character you only can create.

In two weeks I begin rehearsals at Chicago. Will you come back to the world that is yours by right of conquest? Will you gain glory for yourself and for the teacher who gave his best energies to your success? If you will—listen. It is a melodramatic request, maybe—but you know we stage people are always romantic, sentimental, if you like; we never do things in the every-day fashion. Well—this afternoon at five I shall pass your home. If you consent—*be on your piazza wearing the sapphire-blue cloak in which you made our triumph.* Then I shall understand, and the rest will be easy.

At five o'clock! The woman's eyes sought the clock in a neighboring steeple, and noted that it lacked twenty minutes of the hour. They sought once more the Queen Anne cottage opposite, then narrowed to include the cedar chests and rows of red chintz piece bags. Finally, they returned to the trunk, where the sapphire-blue cloak still lay undisturbed.

As she looked, a strange desire surged into her heart,—the desire to assume again that enchanted garment, again to walk in fancy the once beloved boards; and then to fold the garment and its memories away forever.

Steadily, though with eyes burning like those of a long abstainer who reaches for the forbidden cup, she rose, and slowly stretching out her hand, drew the soft velvet folds of the cloak about her. But at the touch of it and the scent of it, a feeling irresistible, unbelievable, tingled through her body. Once more she lived the life of the theater; once more she smelt the odor of raw gas mingled with that of powder and grease paint; once more she heard the scraping and creaking of scenery; she felt the hum of the audience, the thrill of the overture,—all that maddening under-rhythm of the world behind the scenes, whose call is to the player as the bugle note to the soldier.

Against that overmastering voice from the past what availed mere steeling of will and clenching of hands? Nothing to the

woman, who, half blinded, half sickened, forgetful of all the ties that so lately had seemed inviolable, staggered down the stairs and out upon the little porch.

The stage had called; for the moment its voice seemed to fill the universe.

Only for that moment, though. With the next, another voice spoke to her; it came with the rush of a tiny white figure, with the fluttering of yellow curls, with the pressure of soft little hands on the velvet folds of her garment. It said: "O mamma, are you going away in the pitty cloak and leave *me*?"

"My darling!"

Into those words, and through the convulsive embrace that strained the clinging figure to the mother's breast, there thrilled who knows what of shame, of remorse, of that all but divine impulse compared to which the transports of the artist are only as the shadow of a dream? It was the lightning-swift revulsion of a body freed from thralldom by some supreme recoil of spirit.

Five minutes later a man strolling leisurely along the opposite side of the street shot a casual glance at the empty piazza of the pretty Queen Anne cottage, halted for an instant, his eyes on a muslin-curtained window, then, turning, strode swiftly away into the gathering twilight. What he had seen was a common enough sight at this time, and on this street of homes, — simply a woman sitting quietly behind the sunset-gilded panes, her head bent against the shining head of a child.

But in that instant the man knew that he had received his answer, and that it was unchanging.



the observer saw more than this. There was something in the expression of the face that caught and held his attention. He saw a startled lifting of the eyelids, a strange illumination of the eyes, a quivering curve of the faultless lips, which, by some intangible mastery of the painter's art, conveyed the intimation of a recent escape from peril threatening to the very treasures of the soul.

It was a signal display of the power of mind over matter — of the light of thought shining through pigments made of earth.

On this particular occasion I was so lost in study of the picture that I did not hear a footstep near my chair. But when a gentle hand touched my arm, I looked up to see my friend.

“What is it in my early portrait that so engages your attention?” she inquired.

“A story,” I replied, “told by the artist without words.”

The lady looked quietly at her younger self, and then she said: —

“There is a story connected with that picture, and I will tell it to you. It is not a secret, and yet it opens the book of my life at a chapter where the pages have long been closed.

“At the time when I sat for that portrait I was blooming like a rose in a garden. I was really Nature's own child, improved by cultivation, but ever loyal to my mother earth. So from day to day I was happy, unaffected, and unsuspecting. I knew, perhaps, of conditions of evil in the wide world, alien to my joyous and healthful life; but, like other girls of my age and place, I thought of these as far removed from my estate, or fancied if they came near to me I should know them at once, as we recognize a coming storm by gathering clouds.

“Even as an eager reader of many books, I did not learn much by inference of the world's ways; and so I turned to Nature for instruction.

“The flowers in my aunt's garden, the trout in the meadow stream shining with silver and a speckled touch of ruby, the dip of a bird's wing as it skimmed over the unruffled surface of the pond — none of these escaped my attention.

“I was quick to accept as signs of a good world the light that gilds the lily, and the song of the meadow wren. In the sanctu-

ary of my own room I gave offerings of praise to the Supreme Creator for the blessings I enjoyed.

“ Briefly speaking, I was an innocent naturalist.

“ In such vestal seclusion I lived until the coming of the spring that brought my seventeenth birthday. Then, by my aunt’s desire, an arrangement was effected by which I went to New York to have my portrait painted. As was the custom in those days, my trips were made on sailing vessels, passing up and down the river. My aunt had friends in the city, with whom I stayed until the artist declared that he must give the picture its finishing touches in my own home; but before it came to that, I went regularly to his studio in what would now be considered a street far down in the town.

“ This artist was a remarkable man, and now, after these many years, I regret that I did not profit more, or endeavor to profit more, by his conversation.

“ He had a fiery and irritable disposition, which seemed to me exceedingly wearing upon his slender frame. Many of his habits were singular. He talked aloud as he painted, commenting freely upon the features of his sitter,— a habit which I knew robbed him of many opportunities of remunerative work. His most frequent exclamation was ‘ Strange ! ’ and this word he repeated over and over many times. Often he would lean back in his chair, his palette resting on the arm, his right hand raised with the brush poised high in the air, his keen gray eyes burning with intense perception, his hawk-like face pinched with the energy of his thought. ‘ Strange ! ’ he would say, ‘ most strange ! ’ and then fall to work again.

“ But I was young, often restless, and often I tried his patience sorely.

“ At last he declined to add more to his picture in New York. ‘ The Athenian,’ he said, ‘ must be seen in Athens, and the Girl of Lesbos belongs to her island.’

“ And so the old master came to visit us here, and here he seemed like a different man.

“ Every day he went about with me, endeavoring, so I thought, to see with actual sympathy my favorite walks and haunts. The speckled trout in the meadow stream, the kingfisher perched like

a living gem above the tranquil pool, the rose-bordered path, — these things and others he viewed with calm appreciation and a constant study of my face.

“Finally, one morning, he said that the picture was finished and ready for its setting; and in the afternoon he sailed for New York to order a frame.

“During the few days of his absence the events occurred of which I shall now speak for the first time.

“It was a lovely afternoon in June. My aunt, whose health was always delicate, had the blinds of her room partly closed and the curtains down, while she sought an hour’s repose. The other members of the household were variously engaged; I, alone, left the house, and passing through the rose-garden, where I gathered a large bunch of mingled beauties, I went on to a summer-house which quite overhung the kingfisher’s pool, and also gave a charming glimpse of the river, and nearer by, of the broad highway and its overshadowing trees. Here I sat in well-earned indolence; for my forenoons were still devoted to reading and study. Only the kingfisher’s jeweled eye was near to observe my entrance into this bower — or, at least, so I thought. We were friends, and as I leaned from a little balcony directly above the water, his reflection and mine appeared side by side in nature’s mirror. A light wind was stirring. I loosened the coils of my abundant hair, permitting it to fall down over my shoulders and even to my belt. It was curly by nature, and I felt a cooling sensation of relief when the caressing air brushed the soft ringlets about my brow.

“Thus at ease, happy in my retirement, with my roses on the bench by my side, I thought of the old master’s *Girl of Lesbos*, with a smile at the quaint conceit.

“On a convenient little shelf in the summer-house lay a few books of natural history which it was my pleasure to have at hand and sometimes read. Opening one of these at random, my eyes caught the following passage, afterward of momentous interest to me: —

“ ‘The American woodman, from the door of his isolated hut of birch or hemlock bark, frequently has opportunities of observation that the trained naturalist would gladly accept. His

opportunities are those which come from intimate association with nature. His life, his means of subsistence, without other artificial aids than those of his ax and his gun, are dependent upon her bounty and her homely wisdom of the forest.

“ ‘ Shut in at times from a view of the heavens by the loftiest trees, he is yet enabled by a system of minute observations to tell with surprising accuracy of what is passing over the face of the sky. He has his warnings close to his ear of the oncoming tempest, which prudence may suggest that he would better meet outside of the tangled thicket, or low-lying swamp, where he is then at work.

“ ‘ I have often been much entertained with descriptions of forest events, told of by these men around the camp-fire at night.

“ ‘ One old woodman, I remember, said that there was one act of nature which he never viewed without awe. Near his hut stood a tall dead tree, hoary with age, and stripped of its bark by repeated storms. Often he examined this old monarch with care, and could not discover any sufficient hold which it had upon the earth to keep it erect ; apparently a mere summer breeze might blow it down.

“ ‘ One night came a violent tempest. It shook the old man’s frail cabin in its sheltered nook, as if to carry it off like a shifting leaf. It twisted the branches of sturdy trees, and tore up others by the roots. All night the storm raged, but at dawn it died away to a whispering murmur. Early in the morning the old woodman started for his daily toil, determined, on the way, to visit the dead tree and discover, if possible, what anchorage had enabled it to stand in place for so long a time. He was sure, he thought, to find it prostrate, and its aged roots exposed. But when he came to the spot, he stood transfixed with wonder. Like a man of a hundred years, shrunken and bleached, with a lusty younger generation dying at his feet, the ancient tree still bore its scarred and battered shaft upward in the light !

“ ‘ A few days later the woodman’s travel in the forest again brought him into the vicinity of the mysterious tree. It was a still summer afternoon. The leafy solitudes were reposing under a spell of sylvan enchantment. There was not a stir among the leaves of an aspen. But even as the woodcutter’s eye scanned

the time-worn tree, a shudder passed over its entire length; its aged arms shook with a palsy; it reeled for a moment then turned upon its base, and with a sigh, almost a groan, dropped to its bed of loam.

“ ‘What, then, is this mystery of the forest? Is it true, as the woodmen believe, that the very trees have their appointed time?’

“ This was the passage which caught my attention on the naturalist’s page. I read it through with interest, then slowly lifted my eyes from the book.

“ A stranger — evidently a foreigner — stood before me, hat in hand, an expression of polite concern upon his pale, attractive face, as if he feared to alarm or disturb me. He was of medium stature, but so well proportioned and graceful that he appeared even tall. His garments — carelessly worn — were rich of texture and became him well. ‘His auburn locks on either shoulder flowed.’ His eyes were large and gray, having the wide-open lids and broad iris of a lion’s, and also that peculiar power of circumspection which resembles a lion’s glance.

“ All these details, however, I did not notice at first. What held me spellbound was the fact that this stranger seemed not altogether strange — that at the first glance he impressed me as one known before, though how or when I could not recollect.

“ From this momentary spell I was partially roused by the freshening breeze, which blew my loosened hair about my face like a veil; and with a disconcerted movement I brushed it aside with my hand.

“ Then perhaps the intruder saw the mantling color of my cheeks, the red flag of alarm — for I knew not what to think or say. As if to reassure me, he spoke quickly, and at the first word my fancy of a previous meeting vanished, for the voice was strange to me.

“ ‘If I have startled you, I beg your pardon,’ he said gently. ‘I came up from the river across the meadow, and you did not hear my step.’

“ ‘I am a stranger here, and am trying to find some path to the summit of the Palisades. Can you direct me?’

“ I assured him that there was such a path, and even pointed out its entrance to him from where I sat.

“The stranger thanked me as if for granting him a most unusual favor. His words were eloquent, and the expression of his eyes was even more eloquent than his words. Then — as if the exclamation burst from him against his will — he declared that it must be delightful to enjoy such evident health as mine. As for himself, he had felt faint out in the sun, and was glad to get a moment’s rest under the trees.

“For some reason it never occurred to me to think of any other shade than that of my bower, and as the fine pallor of his cheeks seemed to confirm his words, I asked him to be seated while I ran for a goblet of water to the spring which overflowed into the kingfisher’s pool. When I returned he had gathered up my roses, and as he drank from the glass he fixed his gaze upon them. Afterward he buried his face in their bloom.

“Then for half an hour without intermission, he poured forth a flood of words concerning those flowers such as I had not thought could come without premeditation from the lips of one not an immortal. It was a wild frenzy of exposition, admiration, and floral history. The very thorns of the rose, he said, made it notable as the queen of flowers. They were like the stiletos of the peerless Venetian women.

“Who that man was, to this day I do not know,—not even his name is known to me,—but certainly he was gifted with many arts. He had paid me no compliment directly, yet indirectly what he said concerning my roses seemed to apply to me. There were inferences I could not escape, nor yet deny, nor acknowledge. He was at least fifteen years my senior,—to judge by his conversation,—a traveler in many lands, and possessed of an eloquence of language to which I listened, rapt in speechless wonder.

“Under the guise of simply asking and giving information, he implied that my eyes were more lustrous than those of the beauties of Spain, my complexion darker, yet softer and more transparent than that of the lovely women of the Orient. And still as though merely in quest of knowledge, he inquired if it was by the flowing of Indian blood in my veins that I differed thus from what he called ‘those beautiful women in distant lands.’

“Now, in our family there was a tradition of connection through a Virginian ancestry with John Rolfe and his Indian bride; and,

hard pressed for a reply to make to this man of dangerous eloquence, I answered him to that effect.

“He seemed pleased to have his remark verified; and then, apparently observing my embarrassment for the first time, he became more reserved, speaking politely, entertainingly, yet with a respectful intonation that put me once more at my ease.

“At last he rose, declaring that he must press on if he would reach the summit of the Palisades by sunset. As his eyes followed the winding curve of the path, appearing and disappearing in the acclivities, it seemed to me that he hesitated to ascend these unknown heights alone.

“By what subsequent arguments he induced me to act as his guide I cannot at present recollect. Thoughtless I certainly was but not through indifference, but rather through my childlike sympathy and interest for this stranger in a strange land.

“The sun was already casting its declining rays over the banks of the Hudson when we stood on the summit, and the world — my world, at least — lay spread out to our view. As we looked to the north, we saw the great Tappan Sea of the Hudson lying like a buckler of yellow metal a league wide and rimmed with verd-antique; southward we saw the smoky canopy over the distant fort of New York; while downward our sight fell to the river, five hundred feet below our rocky perch. Midway an eagle soared. It seemed from that high cliff as if the majestic bird could descend and grasp with ease in its talons a small boat making for the western shore. Even with all my vigorous strength, I felt exhausted. But my companion showed opposite signs; his pale cheeks were glowing and his eyes shone fiercely bright as they regarded intently the circling eagle and the distant boat.

“As I looked first at him and then around upon that isolated summit, a vague fear and distrust sprang suddenly to my heart.

“Our resting place was a grass-carpeted ledge. Backward a few paces rose a second acclivity, perhaps sixty feet in height, and having a toppling brow and an angry frown. With roots attached among beetling crags, stood a dead cedar tree, polished to whiteness by the elements, and beyond doubt a favorite perch of the eagle's. The naturalist's incident was fresh in my mind. I gazed with dread at this tree. It seemed to me, as I looked, that it

would fall upon us and sweep us from the cliff. But a moment's study convinced me that I need fear no harm from it. Its powerful roots were driven into deep clefts, and the lasting nature of its wood prohibited decay.

"I turned to my companion again. He seemed lost to my presence. His gaze was fixed upon that little boat approaching the nearer shore. My small Temple of Vesta over the kingfisher's pool came to my mental view — a quiet, beautiful, secure retreat. I felt restless because I was so far from it, and decided to return at once. With a hurried declaration of my purpose, I turned to go. But to my surprise and alarm, my companion's manner toward me suddenly changed, and when I would have turned to take the downward path, he prevented this action by quickly seizing my wrists. I struggled at first with anger, and then with piteous complaints, but his hands did not relax his cruel grasp.

"At length he offered to set me at liberty if I would simply listen to reason. Upon my murmured promise of compliance, he told me to sit down by his side while he explained what his purposes were. His voice and manner had become gentle again, but I knew that under his robe of velvet was a coat of mail.

"In the harbor of New York, he said, was then lying a vessel belonging to him, and regularly entered at that port as a South American ship. She was built for either peace or war.

"Briefly speaking, he was a smuggler, and at times a pirate.

"But as he had come into New York to purchase supplies, and his papers were ostensibly correct, there was nothing to indicate that his transactions did not accord with the maritime code. Of this vessel, which he described in glowing terms, it was his desire to make me the sole mistress.

"His purpose — or at least so he said — was that we should go to New York, be married at once, quietly board his ship, and immediately sail for Southern waters.

"‘Do not dream,’ he said finally, ‘that I am speaking on a sudden impulse. This is not the first time that I have seen you.’ Then as I started up, astounded by this confirmation of my first fancy of a previous meeting, he proceeded to explain how he had taken temporary quarters in the same building, indeed, next to the very studio, where I had sat for my picture; how he had watched

me come and go every day for weeks ; how finally he had found out who I was and where I lived, intending even then to carry out the plan culminating to-day.

“ ‘ How little you guessed,’ he finished, with a caressing intonation, ‘ that the unknown man you sometimes brushed by on the stairs loved you and was planning how he could win you for his wife.’

“ Then, pointing to the little boat that I had seen approaching, he informed me that it was his, and built for peace or war. We would descend in that direction, he said, enter the boat, and so pass down to the city at night.

“ It was not his wish to use harsh measures, but I must obey. Such in substance was his proposal, or command.

“ How can I explain to you what my feelings were? Seated on that narrow ledge of rock in midair, I felt as powerless to deny or oppose my captor as though I were his slave standing upon the deck of his pirate ship. In my consternation and despair I sprang to my feet. I waved my hand. I called aloud for help. Out of the void came a mocking answer, the wild cry of the eagle. I thought next to cast myself down on the broken rocks at the base of the cliff ; but nature prohibits such violent transitions. Those who have suffered long, those who have repeatedly prayed for death, may suddenly end existence ; but every pulse of my young body throbbed with eager, healthful life, and I shrank away from the gulf with my hands before my face.

“ I drew back to the broadest part of the ledge, and seizing a maple sapling for support, I stood there, determined to hold fast until my fingers were torn loose.

“ Half fainting, trembling, with my hair falling about my neck, I was very different from the joyous girl who had so fearlessly ascended to that dangerous spot in an antecedent hour. A knowledge of my unwise confidence, of the full extent of my folly, was now crushing my heart. I moaned. I wept. But even through the agony of my tears I could see my tormentor, who had withdrawn a few feet from me, standing unmoved, complacent, calmly guarding the only path of escape.

“ It was then that my mother earth shivered, as if shaken with anger because of her daughter’s distress.

“From the frowning brow of the smaller cliff above my head came a little puff of smoke-like dust, a low, groaning sound, a sudden rush of cold air, followed by a bolting object as savage in its swift descent as a gray wolf.

“It tore up the turf of the narrow shelf.

“It plunged into the abyss with a hollow roar.

“I looked at the spot where my would-be abductor had stood.

“He was not there!

“The very ground was thrown up as if by a giant’s shovel! An act of nature had avenged my misplaced trust; a stone, huge, grim, and jagged, had fallen from its bed! The strain of that hour had been too great for consciousness, and I swooned.

“When I revived, the old master was bending over me with a most anxious face. As soon as I was enough recovered to tell my story, he explained to me that, having missed me at home, he had taken the upward path after hearing the hollow roar of the fallen stone.

“When half way up, he saw a group of men carrying a dead or injured person into a boat near the foot of the cliff, and so had hastened to reach the summit.

“‘My child,’ he whispered, ‘this is strange, most strange! You are innocent of harm and of evil; be comforted.’

“After a few days it was his desire to retouch my portrait. When it was finished, he said, ‘I have told a story without words.’”



A Postponed Arrest.

BY LELAND INGERSOLL.



"E'S the man you're after, I guess," said Sheriff Bryan, when he had carefully examined the copiously stamped and sealed documents, and listened to the statements of his visitor; "don't you think so, boys?"

The interested clerks and deputies voiced prompt concurrence with their chief's opinion. "It's queer we never suspected anything about him," said one of the little group. "He was a hard case, you say?"

"About the worst I ever see," answered the New Mexico official, with a yawn which seemed to measure centuries of sleeplessness. "They ain't any of 'em what you might call mild in my distric', but Ellis was the cream of the lot. I don't know as he was vicious, exactly, but the uneasiest, recklessesst cuss in the county; seemed like he just couldn't stay quiet and peaceable. Still, most everybody liked him — I did myself — and when this thing came out a good many of us were sorry it wasn't some other fellow. So he's taken to farmin', eh?"

Bryan nodded. "It ain't much of a farm; more like a stone quarry, and half of it straight up and down. He's managed to get along, though, and paid his rent prompt, they tell me. He comes down to the corners a couple of times a month for supplies and things sent on from the East by express, and that's all we see of him. No one round here has ever been inside the house, so far as I know, except the doctor. He goes up now and then to see the old man. I wonder whether it's his father. That's what he claims."

"Most likely," said the Western sheriff; "I don't know who else."

"He's about done for, anyway, Doc says. Blind and half paralyzed. I hope he's lucky enough not to know the truth about his son."

“Mebbe he does know, and that’s what’s the matter with him. Well, there’s no use wastin’ time, and we’d better be startin’ out, I judge. If you could let me have a wagon and two or three men, I’ll see that you’re fixed up for it all right.”

“You can take my rig,” said Bryan. “Bill, go out and bring it round, and you, and Kelley, and Ryder go with Mr. McQuistion. Maybe you’d better take more men.”

“Three’s plenty, and it’ll be more comfortable riding. How far do you call the place from here?”

“Two miles and a half, and up hill most of the way. Bill knows the road.”

The wagon rattled up to the door, and the men took their places, wrapping themselves closely in the blankets. The wind was strong, and whirled the snow in angry puffs against them as the horses picked their way slowly over the frozen ground. It was too cold for useless talk, and, excepting the muttered commands of the driver, almost nothing was said during the long half-hour’s climb up the winding hill road.

At length the deputy checked the horses in the shelter of a ledge of rock which rose like an abrupt wall. “We can’t drive any further,” he said; “there’s only a foot-path from here on. The shanty’s just around the corner.”

McQuistion peered into the darkness ahead. “It’ll limber us up to walk, but we may be some time gettin’ things fixed,” he said. “Will the team stand all right, do you think?”

“Till morning,” answered the other. “They’re out of the wind here.”

“Get down, boys,” said the sheriff, and the men swung themselves from the wagon and waited while the driver heaped the blankets upon the horses and tethered them to one of the dwarf pine trees which grew from the seemingly solid rock; then McQuistion led the way, and the others followed, along a narrow and little-used path at a right angle to the main road. They had stumbled on in silence for some time when a sharp turn to the left showed the light of the cabin a few yards away.

The leader halted and waited till his men gathered about him. “We’ll surround the house,” he said. “Bill, you go to the back, one of you fellows take each side, and I’ll look after the front.

Don't make no more noise than ye can help, and if ye see anybody movin' yell at him to stop, and shoot if he don't stop. Go ahead now. When I think you've had time enough to get ready, I'll whistle and you answer me. Then I'll go towards the door and give him a hail. Look sharp."

The deputies dived among the trees at the side of the path, and the sheriff waited, his ears strained to catch any sound of an alarm. The silence was unbroken, however, and at last he began to move forward warily and noiselessly, with the yielding step of an animal. He stopped a dozen paces from the cabin and whistled sharply. He was answered at once from either side, and the light which streamed from the window of the cabin was blocked for an instant, as though some one inside had heard the signal and looked out to learn the cause.

The sheriff lifted his voice in the long wailing call of the plainsmen. "O Dan," he cried, "Dan Ellis!"

There was the sound of a slowly raised sash.

"Who is it?" asked a voice which the sheriff recognized with a grim chuckle. "What do you want?"

"It's me, Dan. It's Sam McQuiston, and I want you. Do you know me?"

A long silence followed, and the sheriff made ready for the struggle which he thought inevitable. At last the door was opened, and a man stood on the threshold looking out uncertainly. "Whereabouts are you?" he called.

"Here," answered the sheriff, loosening the revolver in his belt.

The man walked toward him swiftly.

"Is it you, Mac, sure enough?" he asked.

"Yes, it's me," said McQuiston. "Stand where you are, Dan, and don't make no fuss; there's a *posse* with me. Halt, I tell you."

Ellis stopped before the weapon's glittering menace, and held out his open hands. "You needn't worry," he said. "There's no fight in me now. What is it, the same old Cruces business?"

"The very same," the sheriff answered. He came out of the shadow of the trees and approached Ellis, who stood waiting in the flickering shaft of light from the doorway. The three depu-

ties glided from behind the house, and closed in upon them noiselessly.

Ellis gave one hurried glance about him, and turned quickly to McQuiston.

"If you'll wait an hour I'll go with you," he said. "If you won't, you'll have to take me. You know what that means, Mac."

The sheriff held up his hand to stop his followers. "What difference will an hour make?" he asked.

"My father is in there," said Ellis, pointing towards the cabin. "He's alone, and dying. If I've got to leave him now, I want a little time so I can make some arrangements to have him taken care of." He hesitated for a moment, and then went on desperately. "He don't know what I have done," he said. "He thinks I'm straight. For God's sake, let him die thinking that way."

"I don't understand, exactly," said McQuiston, moved by the evident agony of the appeal.

"Come in, and I'll show you," Ellis answered, turning back in the direction of the house. "Oh, it's the truth," he added fiercely, as the deputies started forward to intercept him. "Can't you see I'm telling you the truth?"

The sheriff waved back his men. "I'll chance it, Dan," he said. "Go ahead."

The young man led the way in silence, the officers following close at his heels. At the door he paused and turned again. "I'll have to lie about your being here," he said. "I wish you wouldn't give me away if you can help it."

The sheriff nodded. "We'll keep mum," he said.

"You won't be sorry, I think," said Ellis. "And I'll thank you, though that doesn't amount to much. Come in, then."

The room which they entered was long and low, and almost destitute of decoration. The walls had been daubed with clay to stop up the chinks between the unevenly fitted logs, and the same material served to fill the cracks of the uneven floor.

A huge chimney projected some four or five feet from the west wall, and in the recess so formed on the further side of the fireplace some attempt had been made to secure comfort and homelikeness.

A square of many-colored carpet was spread where the sunlight, filtering through the narrow window, could linger for a little while each day; and there were two or three chairs and a table of modern shape.

On a bed which had been drawn up close to the blaze of the fire a man was lying, covered with soft Indian blankets. He raised himself with evident exertion at the entrance of the five men, and turned to them a face framed in snow-white hair and beard, and bearing the anxious, dependent, and yet trusting expression of blindness.

“What is it, Dannie?” he asked. “Is anything the matter?”

“Nothing at all,” said Ellis gently. “Some men have come up from the mines and we’ve got a few things to talk over.” He crossed the room, and pouring a small glassful from a bottle on the table, carried it carefully to the bedside, and knelt beside the sick man.

“It’s medicine time,” he said. “Here, dad.”

The old man drank the mixture, and when he returned the glass let his hand rest fondly on the young man’s for a moment, and spoke in a tone inaudible to the others, then sank down among the pillows with a smile, and closed his eyes.

Ellis rose and came back to the sheriff and his men, who were still standing near the door. He dragged a heavy wooden bench to the corner of the fireplace, and produced a couple of cracker boxes from the other side of the room. “Sit down, if you will,” he said, “and I’ll tell you how I come to be here, and why I asked you to wait.”

McQuiston took possession of one of the boxes, and stretched his long legs to the blaze luxuriously, the deputies following his example. Ellis stood leaning against the chimney, his elbow in a hollow of the masonry and his head resting on his hand.

“First of all, Sam,” he said, “what will come of it when we get back there?”

The sheriff hesitated, and looked over his shoulder toward the bed.

“He’s asleep,” said Ellis. “That medicine acts like a drug on him, and I gave him a big dose. A little more would send him to sleep for good.”

"Well," McQuiston said slowly, "I reckon the worst will come of it. I suppose you know what the crowd done to Brady after you got away."

"Yes," answered the other. "I read about it in the papers."

"They were just as hot after you," the sheriff went on, "and we scoured the country for a week. Then things sort of died down, till just a little while ago, when we got news where ye were. That set 'em goin' again, and it looks to me like there's more feelin' against you than there ever was. I don't reckon you better expect any mercy."

"I don't expect any," Ellis answered shortly, "nor deserve any, perhaps. If you had only got here a few days later, I shouldn't have cared. I knew it would have to come sometime; but I did hope nothing would happen for awhile; not until —" He paused and waved his hand toward the sleeper.

The sheriff nodded sympathetically. "I'm sorry, myself," he said.

"This is the way it was," Ellis continued; "when I made my break, I started off on the Alanna trail for a ways, and then turned up into the hills because I knew you would naturally follow along the trail, thinking I couldn't go anywhere else."

"That's what we done," McQuiston admitted. "We followed that blamed road for miles both ways, and had guards waitin' for ye to come out of the bush, but ye didn't come."

"No," said the other, with a mirthless smile, "I didn't come."

"How did ye manage to get back without no one seein' ye? Traveled at night, I reckon, and laid mighty low."

"I didn't get back. I went on."

"Not across the cañon?" said the sheriff, looking up in open amazement.

"Yes, across the cañon. Don't ask me how, for I couldn't tell you. I don't believe I stopped moving for twenty-four hours, and I was more dead than alive half the time. I remember falling in dozens of places. Here is one of the marks." He pushed the hair back from his forehead, and showed a long red seam stretching across the temple. "That pretty near saved you all this trouble," he said.

"I'll bet you're the first man who ever got across," McQuiston

said wonderingly. "I wouldn't have thought ye could make it." His tone roused the deputies, and they regarded Ellis with increased interest as he spoke again.

"I managed it somehow," he said. "I struck Johnsville along in the middle of the night, and told the operator there that I'd been knocked over by the noon train, and laid senseless on the track ever since. He believed me and patched me up as well as he could; then I got aboard the express and made for Kansas City, where I stayed quiet in a hotel till I got better. I had my beard shaved and got rid of my other clothes, though I wasn't afraid you would locate me right off."

"I should say not," agreed the sheriff. "We never thought of your making for the railroad. Didn't suppose it was possible for any man to make it. Why didn't you go on to the Gulf and get aboard some steamer? That's what I'd have done."

"That was my idea," Ellis answered; "but you see I knew that meant good-bye to this country for a long time and perhaps altogether, and I wanted to see the old folks before I left. I set out to hunt for them, meaning to stay a little while and give dad some of my cash, and then light out for good, but things turned out different."

He stood erect and faced the listening officers. "I left home fifteen years ago," he said unsteadily; "left home cursing my father because he tried to keep me from ruining myself and every one who cared for me. They never heard a word from me all that time; never knew whether I was alive or dead; but they waited for me just the same, ready to take me back, and hoping and praying I'd come. Mother wouldn't give me up, even after other folks had forgotten all about me. She died looking for me, and had her bed pulled up close to the window, so she could watch the road. That was the last thing she saw, just that stretch of empty road, and nobody coming." He broke off abruptly and leaned against the chimney corner, his face buried in his hands. The others gazed straight before them at the wavering glow of the fire and waited silently.

At length Ellis raised his head and went on with his story. He spoke in an even tone, but so low that his hearers bent toward him, like spectators at a play.

“Father was helpless, and had been getting worse for a long time,” he said. “I think it was worrying about me that brought his trouble on. The farm was mortgaged and the notes long past due. He was really living on charity, though people were kind enough to keep him from finding it out. I had some money — you know how I got it — and I brought him out here and rented this place for us to live in. I’ve thanked God for his blindness, because it’s let me give him by my lies the happiness which he couldn’t get any other way. I have told him, and he believes, that I own an interest in a mine near here and am doing well. I’ve told him almost everything that he’d like to have true. I’ve lied to him in every way except about my being glad to have him here with me.” He stopped and let his eyes rest on Mc-Quiston’s face. “Do you blame me?” he asked.

The sheriff pulled his long beard thoughtfully. “I don’t think anybody’d blame ye,” he said; “not me, at any rate. I think I know how ye feel.”

“There ain’t much more,” Ellis said wearily; “unless I should tell you all the feelings I’ve had, and the thoughts that have lived with me for two years while I’ve watched my father getting weaker every day. I don’t think any of you would want to hear them. They ain’t been very pleasant, gentlemen. Perhaps you can imagine how a man would feel in my position, having to lie to the only human being in the world he cares to tell the truth to, and knowing all the time that the whole thing is his fault, and there’s nobody else to blame. That don’t make it any easier to bear.”

All at once his self-control seemed to forsake him, and he took a step forward and held out his arms, as though involuntarily, to the men before him. “I wouldn’t ask you for myself,” he said huskily. “It’s been hell for me all the while; but that old man has got the first taste of happiness he’s had since I was a baby, and he used to play with me, with mother looking on and laughing at us. His first chance to take any pride in his son has come to him now, because I’ve lied to him and he doesn’t know the difference. He is proud of me — he said only the other day that he wished mother was alive, so she could know how good a son I was. Think of that, men, and me sitting here in this place and listening to him. Ain’t there some way to keep him from know-

ing the truth? It won't be but a little while — ain't there some way? I'm ready to go with you now if it wasn't for him — God knows I'm ready enough." His voice broke and the tears streamed down his cheeks.

The sheriff rose to his feet, and laid his hand awkwardly on the young man's shoulder. "Don't take on so, Dan," he said, as gently as though speaking to a little child. "Mebbe there's some way out of it, after all. Don't take it so hard, boy."

A sound came from the other side of the room, and they turned in sudden apprehension. The sick man was sitting upright, stretching out his hands to the glow of the fire, and talking happily, as though to an unseen hearer. For a moment all were held motionless by a kind of awe, and then with common impulse they hurried toward the bed.

Ellis sank upon his knees and took the trembling hands in his own.

"What's the matter, dad?" he asked anxiously. "Are you worse?"

The old man did not seem to hear the question, but bent his head like one listening to a far-off voice.

"You're always waitin' for me, Marthy," he said, and smiled lovingly at the firelight. "Seems like, no matter where I be, I can fairly see ye sittin' there an' lookin' for me to come round the turn. Where's the boy, up to some mischief? There never was such a little cuss for makin' other people trouble. He gets that from your side of the house, eh, mother? Remember how ye used to make me stand round?" He paused and bent his head again in eager attention, then chuckled to himself, as though some one had answered him.

"Ef he only grows up like ye," he said, "I'll be the happiest man in the county, an' the luckiest." A shade of anxiety crept into his voice. "I reckon he'll come out all right, don't you? He's all we've got, ye know, an' I sort of think no boy can go wrong with you a teachin' him."

Some recollection flashed through Ellis's mind, and his face was drawn with the pain which he could not altogether keep back.

"I had a hard time gettin' through," the sick man went on. "The road's growin' harder, an' harder an' it's tired me considerable.

I ain't so spry as I was once. Call in the boy, an' let's shut up for the night. Seems like I can't keep awake, somehow."

He closed his eyes and sank back heavily. Ellis tried in vain to lift him. "Speak to me, dad," he cried. "It's Dan. Won't you speak to me?"

The old man roused himself with an effort. "Mother found ye, did she?" he said drowsily. "I thought ye'd come when ye heard her a callin'. Ye mustn't run off like that again. It kinder makes us worry, ye know. Good night, sonny. I can't keep awake no longer. Good night."

For a long time Ellis knelt there, his head bowed upon his father's lifeless hand; and when at length he rose and turned to the officers, who stood silent in the shadow, they saw upon his face the peace which knows not fear — nor hope.



A Geometrical Design.*

BY MARY FOOTE ARNOLD.



OUR aunt, Miss Ellen Weathersby, lived and died in the Weathersby homestead in Strangetown, which is about fifty miles from the city where we then lived.

At the time of her death Aunt Ellen was old, wealthy, and eccentric; how eccentric we did not fully realize until we had learned, through her will, of the strange conditions which prevented us from at once entering upon our inheritance.

As mother had been quite ill at the time Aunt Ellen died, none of us had attended the funeral. But a week later, when the package arrived containing a copy of the will and Aunt Ellen's letter, mother was well enough to appear at the breakfast table.

Of course, the will received our first attention, Caroline reading it aloud. Like all documents of the kind, it was written in legal form and was properly signed, witnessed, and attested. The paragraphs which especially interested us were as follows:—

“I, Ellen Weathersby, being of sound mind and memory, do will and bequeath my entire estate to that one of my three nieces, named, respectively, Caroline Weathersby, Ellen Ann Weathersby, and Mary Weathersby, daughters of my brother, the late William Weathersby, who shall find the proofs of said estate during the year following the date of my death. Said proofs are in a small iron box, and consist of deeds to my real estate, bonds, mortgages, certificates of stock in various mining and manufacturing concerns, the family jewels, and a sum of gold.

“Furthermore, I will and decree that said nieces with their mother, Mary Ann Weathersby, shall reside, rent free, in my furnished house in Strangetown for one year, beginning with the

* This story received a fifth prize of \$100 in THE BLACK CAT prize competition which closed March 31, 1897.

date of my death, in order that my nieces shall have abundant opportunity to search for said proofs in said box. If, at the end of said year, no one of my nieces shall have found such proofs, then Caroline, Ellen Ann, and Mary Weathersby, and their mother, Mary Ann Weathersby, shall move out of my house and relinquish all claim to my estate.

“In such case, a second will made by me, and left with Cyrus Clifford, president of the First National Bank of Strangetown, shall be opened, and my estate settled according to its provisions.

“Furthermore, I decree that the contents of this will shall be known only to my three nieces, their mother, the two witnesses, and the executor herein named, until after the expiration of one year from the date of my death. Otherwise this will shall become null and void, the second will becoming the true will.

“I hereby appoint Cyrus Clifford executor under both wills, he to furnish customary bond.”

The explanatory letter, which was addressed to mother, and which accompanied this unique document, was characteristic of Aunt Ellen, showing, as it did, her hatred and distrust of men, her petty economies, and her firm belief that her way was the only way.

Caroline read:—

Dear Sister-in-law:—The time has come when I cannot reasonably expect to live much longer, therefore I have made such disposal of my estate as will enable me to die with a clear conscience and a peaceful heart.

I have made two wills, both of which are held in trust by Cyrus Clifford, whom I selected as executor, because I am convinced that he is too cowardly to be otherwise than upright, he being a prominent Methodist, and afraid to follow those impulses natural to all men.

I have thought of leaving my worldly goods to some noble charity; but after all, “blood is thicker than water,” and as I near the end my heart turns to my next of kin. Would they were worthy of my beneficence!

Doubtless you can recall, Mary Ann, that during my annual visits to your home in the past, I have sometimes criticized the methods by which you have brought up your family. It is not all of life to be musical, literary, and society favorites. It pains me to write it, but your daughters have no practical knowledge of ordinary affairs, and, more deplorable yet, none of that good old commodity—sound common sense.

A woman who is not ashamed to use her hands in any honest employment will retain the respect of all right-thinking people. To this end, I once advised you to keep a cow, suggesting that Caroline should do the milking, and thus enable you to add to your narrow income by the sale of the milk.

But no, Caroline must keep her hands in good condition to practise her music; and the other girls had a horror of cows!

Equally trivial was Ellen Ann's excuse, when I suggested that she should collect the remnants which are going to waste in your scrap bags, and piece a quilt with which to eke out your bedding. Ellen Ann was preparing for college, and had to study her Greek and Latin. (I doubt her ability; she is too much like you, Mary Ann, whose book learning was always superficial.)

You may remember, also, that Mary (foolishly nicknamed Molly) once flatly refused to trim the grass borders of the path with sheep shears, though I carefully explained to her that by so doing she would save a laborer's hire, and that "a penny saved is a penny earned." But Mary will never do anything but laugh, and talk, and have a good time.

I could cite other instances, but these are enough to illustrate my point. I forgive my nieces for their past misdoings, and offer them one more chance.

For they are Weathersbys.

The iron box is in a safe place; and will not easily be found, if I know your daughters, and I think I do. However, should one of them be smart enough to find it, the box and all that is in it and pertains to it shall be hers to do with as she pleases.

The hiding place of the box will be marked by a sign. That sign is a circle within a circle.

The key is with Cyrus Clifford, though he does not know the whereabouts of the box it unlocks. No man should be trusted too far.

It is only proper to state that I have deposited a sum of money with an attorney named Otis (who appears honest, though there is no telling — at least, he does not smoke cigarettes), with which he is to pay all insurance and taxes due on my houses and lands, in advance for one year, beginning with the date of my death. He will also collect all rentals pertaining to said houses and lands, and deposit the funds therefrom in the First National Bank with Cyrus Clifford, who will hold them in trust until the expiration of the year.

Mr. Otis and my servant, Amanda Cummins, are the witnesses to the first will. Amanda can be trusted to hold her tongue. I know not about Mr. Otis, he being a man.

No one except my three nieces shall participate in the search, nor shall they receive advice upon the subject from any one.

Good-by to all, and good luck to one of you.

Affectionately,

ELLEN WEATHERSBY.

By the time Caroline had finished reading this frank and ingenuous epistle we were all bordering on that state of mind vulgarly described as being "knocked silly." We were amused, indignant, and disappointed by turns. We stared at one another mistily.

"So my year abroad to study the great masters turns out to be a myth of the first quality," said Caroline, trying to speak lightly.

“And I shall have the pleasure of working my way through college after all,” said Ellen Ann, with quivering lip.

I (nicknamed Molly) swallowed something in my throat and burst out: “Girls, we m-must find that box if we h-have to b-bl-ow the h-house up to do it,” then broke down completely.

All of which but showed the sad straits we were in, and that each had secretly nourished a hope that Aunt Ellen’s will would bring us succor. For if ever there was a family of four dilapidated women in need of money, we were that family.

We moved to Strangetown.

Being young, we soon were more hopeful, and came to regard this queer episode in our lives in the nature of a prolonged lark which might terminate at any minute in something quite splendid. An acute sense of the ridiculous, coupled with our love of mystery, did much to bring about this state of affairs. Then, too, our pride was aroused. It was clearly our duty to disprove Aunt Ellen’s accusations, and only when the prize had been found and divided (for, of course, we expected to share it equally) could we feel that this had been done.

The homestead was spacious, comfortable, and well furnished in the fashion of fifty years ago. The grounds surrounding it were large and well kept. Years before we had heard tales of secret drawers and closets in this very house, and of Aunt Ellen’s habit of keeping large sums of money concealed in the house and about her person. Already our wits were sharpening and a delightful expectancy pervaded our every action.

One night about a week after our arrival in Strangetown, Ellen Ann and I were awakened by Caroline. She stood at our bedside in her nightgown, a tall candle shedding its rays upon her excited features. “Get up, girls, I’ve found the sign,” she whispered.

Half dazed, we followed her to where an ancient chiffonier stood against the wall. Caroline placed a trembling finger on the quaint carving which embellished its old sides. Sure enough, there, faintly outlined between a dragon’s claws, was a circle within a circle!

We became very wide awake, indeed. We had hardly expected to find the treasure so soon, yet here we were just on the verge of its discovery. At first, we thought of calling mother to

share the fun of unearthing it; then concluded that, after all, it would be pleasanter to surprise her with it at the breakfast table. How we worked! We removed drawers, measured partitions, examined corners and peered into crevices. Our teeth chattered with the cold; our heads ached with the excitement. At dawn we crept back to bed with our spirits at zero.

At dinner the next evening we again discovered the sign in the carved legs of the old black walnut table at which we sat. Later, the sign appeared on chairs, bookcases, bureaus, and wardrobes. In fact, nearly every article of furniture in the house seemed to have been carved after the same pattern. We carefully examined each in turn, until we became convinced that no iron box could possibly be hidden within it.

Then we attacked the walls. Two rooms were newly papered, the design being trailing vines festooned in circles, one within the other. We examined every inch of those walls, first with a mallet to detect hollow places, then with a magnifying glass to bring to light otherwise invisible cracks.

After that up came the carpets, some of which were replete with that pattern which now recurred with sickening frequency. Under the carpets and on the board floors were circles painted in dual hues; black within white and red within yellow. We invested in a tool chest and took turns in sawing. We removed sections of the floors and poked long sticks between the joists, listening meanwhile for the sound of clanking iron. This we kept up for a week, then stopped to rest. Old Amanda, who had stayed with us for a song, cleared up the muss, smiling grimly.

The conviction was growing within us that there was method in Aunt Ellen's madness. She had gained one point, — she had made us work at last. Instead of devoting six hours a day to her music, Caroline now practised by fits and starts, and Ellen Ann read Greek only as a diversion. As for me, though my body sometimes lagged, my spirits never did.

The necessity for secrecy about the occupation in which we spent our days sometimes made it awkward for us when the young people of the neighborhood became over-curious. For that reason Mr. Otis, the young attorney who had found favor in Aunt Ellen's eyes, made an especially agreeable companion. For he was in the

secret, and we could talk freely before him. And though he could not advise us, he listened to the recitals of our experiences and the reiterations of our hopes and fears with remarkable fortitude. He was quite handsome, with dark, sympathetic eyes, and a friendly smile. We took to him immediately, and it came to be quite a matter of course that Mr. Otis should appear in our drawing room (or rather, the drawing room which we fondly hoped would some day be ours) several times a week.

I sometimes fancied, though, for all his apparent interest in our one absorbing topic, that somehow Mr. Otis disapproved of it, and even, occasionally, avoided talking about it. At such times he would listen to Caroline's music, or read Browning and Ruskin with Ellen Ann, or even talk nonsense with me.

In this pleasant way winter slipped into spring, and the hiding place of the iron box still remained a mystery. One morning, Ellen Ann appeared before us, her clothing covered with dust, and a zigzag line of soot running from chin to eyebrow.

"The sign is in the cellar; hurry up!" she exclaimed.

We hurried up—and down. There in plain sight, laid on end in the hard cement floor, were two circles of bricks, one within the other. We looked and looked and looked again. To be sure; how blind we had been!

Then three young women who had once refused, respectively, to milk a cow, to piece a quilt, and to cut grass with shears, now took hammer, chisel, crowbar, and spade, and pried up those bricks and dug the earth out from under them. After two days of this, we collapsed and took to our beds.

Before that mother had maintained a position of strict neutrality; she now asserted her authority and said such foolishness must stop. We must use reason or give up the search altogether.

"Mr. Otis called this evening," she added, "and I was forced to invent excuses for you. I was ashamed to give the true reason why none of you could receive him."

Our answer to that was one dismal, triple groan.

However, we received mother's admonitions with becoming meekness and refrained from further research for a time. Meanwhile a judicious use of liniment restored our muscles to their normal condition.

As spring advanced, the crocuses came up in rings of two; the tulips and daffodils followed suit; and circles of lilies of the valley peeped forth from wreaths of fern. In truth, the whole place presented a tantalizing arrangement of circles within circles.

A mania for transplanting seized upon us. More "horticultural atrocities" were perpetrated that summer than were ever dreamed of in Aunt Ellen's philosophy. Old ladies calling on mother remarked that her daughters seemed so fond of gardening, and callow youths looking over the back fence asked our reasons for transplanting asparagus into the pansy bed.

When we found the sign carved into the bark of the different shade trees, and chiseled into the stone foundation of the house (with a hand pointing downward), we realized that Aunt Ellen's sense of humor had been greatly underrated by us. She had evidently spent months, if not years, in preparing this cruel joke. Discouraged and humiliated, we resumed the duties of our former life, which now seemed stale and unprofitable.

About this time life, to me, assumed a singular aspect. I seemed to lose interest in everything, even in the iron box, and liked best of all to sit quite still and look into space. I became absent-minded, lost my appetite, had strange forebodings of some calamity about to befall me, and felt as if I had buried all my friends. Above all, I hated to hear Caroline sing to Mr. Otis. Mother said I had malaria, and gave me quinine, which I swallowed without a murmur, and had visions — which I shall not record. For even I did not recognize the malady which had laid me low.

Mr. Otis, too, seemed changed in some unaccountable way. He no longer chatted with me, but evinced a feverish desire to sing duets with Caroline, or to discuss psychology with Ellen Ann. Yet often when he was in the midst of a song or a discussion, I would find his melancholy eyes fixed upon me with so inscrutable an expression as to send my pulse fluttering high into the nineties. More curious still, he who had hitherto been, apparently, so indifferent to the hiding place of the iron box now became painfully anxious as to its whereabouts. Not a day passed but he asked each of us in turn if we were any nearer the solution of the

mystery. The sickening thought came to me that perhaps he wanted to marry one of my sisters, but waited to see which one should win the prize; then I cast the thought from me. I would not believe that he was so mercenary.

Our year of probation was almost over; only two more days remained. We held a family conclave that morning, and agreed that we might as well abandon the search. That we might break the will did not occur to us; besides, we recognized Aunt Ellen's right to do as she pleased with her own.

That evening Ellen Ann attended a meeting of the Shakespeare Club, and Caroline went to choir rehearsal. Mother kept her room with a nervous headache. (Heartless as it sounds, I shall never cease to be thankful that the poor dear was so ill that night.) I was idly drumming on the piano when who should come but Mr. Otis! I was intensely surprised to see him, but, of course, tried to be polite. I offered him a chair; then we said nothing for several minutes. When at last I looked up, there were those eyes gazing at me with that melancholy expression which I knew so well, and which seemed to read my very soul.

"You have not found the box yet, I suppose?" he asked.

That box again! Like the sting of a whip lash, it brought me to myself.

"Mr. Otis," said I, with great dignity, "to relieve your mind, I will say that we have not found the box, nor do we expect to find it. I, myself, have given up the search. Like Pandora's box, it is more trouble than it is worth."

But my chilling manner seemed only to make him glad. He came to the sofa and sat down beside me.

"Do you mean that, Molly?" he asked.

"Yes, Mr. Otis," I answered.

"Say 'Oliver,'" said he softly.

I said "Oliver"; his eyes blazed so that I dared not refuse.

Then he took my hand and held it; and out of respect to his mood I did not take it away. Which was quite improper, I know, but what can a girl do when a man acts that way?

"Molly," he again said very softly, "are you sure that you cannot find the box?"

“Yes!” said I, so emphatically that he almost dropped my hand (but not quite).

“Then, Molly, I must tell you that I love you.”

With that I looked into his face, our eyes met, and — I really cannot write it.

But we came to a perfect understanding; those strange forebodings and that vague unrest left me, and I became singularly calm. I knew now that life was worth living, box or no box.

It seems that Oliver had loved me from the very first, though he had not intended to tell me so until after the search had ended. For he did not believe we would find the box, and he did not want my family to think he was a fortune hunter. (The very idea!) But finding me alone that evening and the time so nearly up, he threw caution to the winds — and there we were.

Gratitude welled within me that I had been spared the discovery of the box. Then the startling thought came, suppose I had found it! What then? I solemnly propounded this question to Oliver. But before he could reply my sisters came in, and to this day I do not know what his answer would have been.

The next morning mother was still quite miserable, and sent word that she did not wish to be disturbed. The girls came to breakfast with red eyes and an aversion to cheerful subjects of conversation. They realized, poor things, that this was to be the last day in the dear old house. I tried my best to be solemn, too, but the joy within would bubble up.

An hour after breakfast I slipped out to take a walk towards the business part of the town. I said that I wanted to buy some thread, then tried to feel sorry as I thought of the time coming when even thread would be considered a luxury by my family.

To buy the thread I was obliged to pass a certain office; of course I did not dream of seeing Oliver, and to preclude such a possibility I kept on the opposite side of the street. But when I got just opposite the office, I timidly raised my eyes to see the place where my beloved passed so many hours each day.

There I saw something which first turned me to stone, and then

sent the blood racing through my veins like mad. This is what I saw painted in gold above the office door: —



I dashed across the street, flew up the steps, and fell like a whirlwind upon Oliver Otis, attorney at law, seated at his desk.

“Give me the iron box,” I gasped.

Oliver went white, then red. Without a word he rose, twisted the knob to the great safe, took out the iron box, and placed it in my hands. It was so heavy that I let it slide to the floor, then I sat down upon it, and seizing Oliver Otis’s hand, kissed it, to his utter confusion, and the amusement of the office boy.

Oliver lifted me to my feet, and putting me into a chair, explained how Aunt Ellen had insisted upon leaving the box in his care; and how, though objecting, he finally gave in. Also, how sorry he became when he got to know us and realized the injustice being done to us; for then he was bound by the conditions of the will, and was obliged to let events shape our futures.

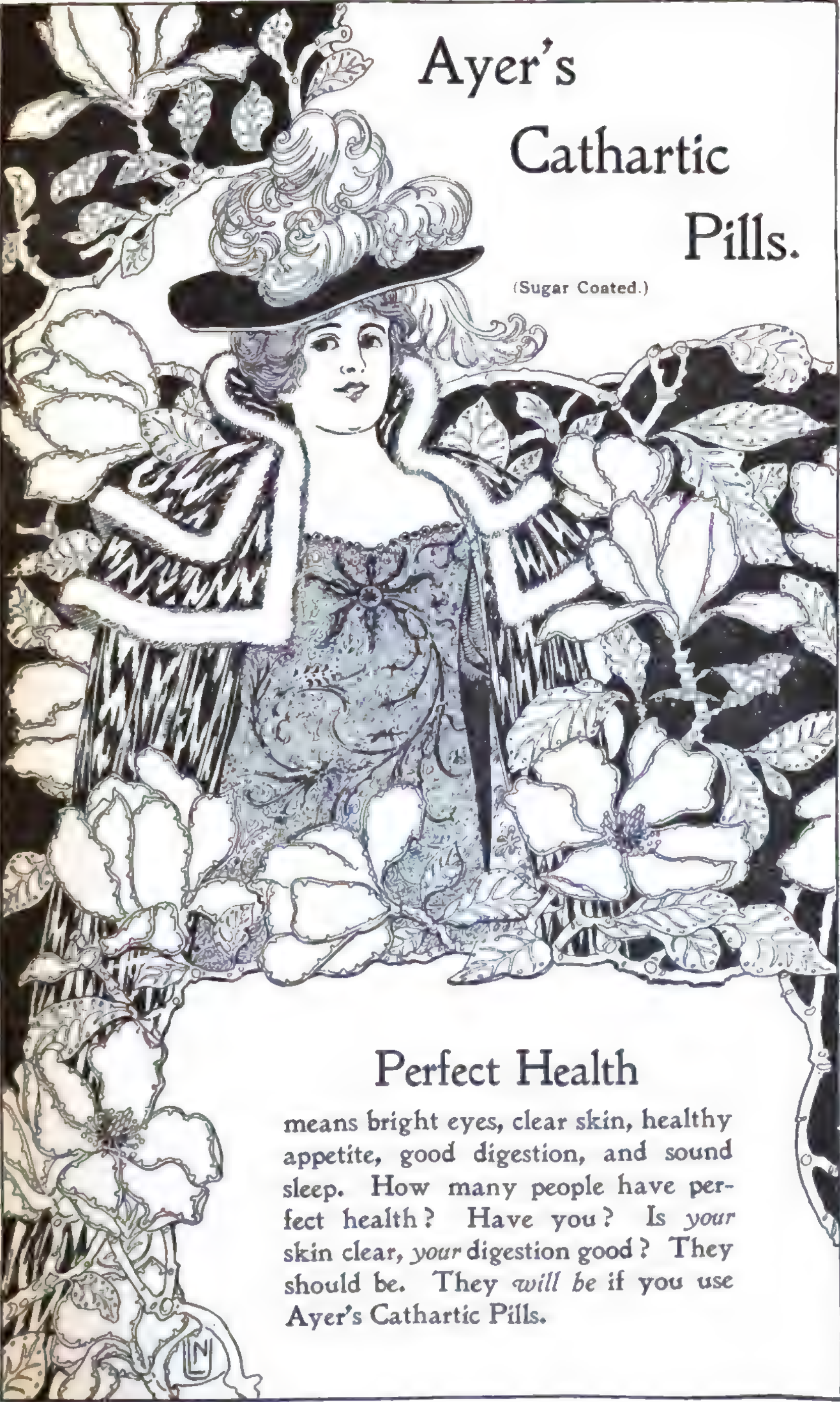
Which they did to my entire satisfaction.

.
The second will? Everything was to go towards founding an institution for the Discipline of Refractory Children. The document was even more awe inspiring than the first one, with whereases and wherefores to throw to the birds; a sad waste of red tape, in my opinion.

Yes, Caroline is going abroad with mother, Ellen Ann is going to college, and I am going to be married.

And we all hope to live long and happily.



A detailed black and white illustration of a woman standing in a garden. She is wearing a large, ornate hat with a veil and a long, patterned dress with a fur collar. She is surrounded by large, detailed flowers and foliage. The illustration is framed by a decorative border.

Ayer's Cathartic Pills.

(Sugar Coated.)

Perfect Health

means bright eyes, clear skin, healthy appetite, good digestion, and sound sleep. How many people have perfect health? Have you? Is *your* skin clear, *your* digestion good? They should be. They *will* be if you use Ayer's Cathartic Pills.

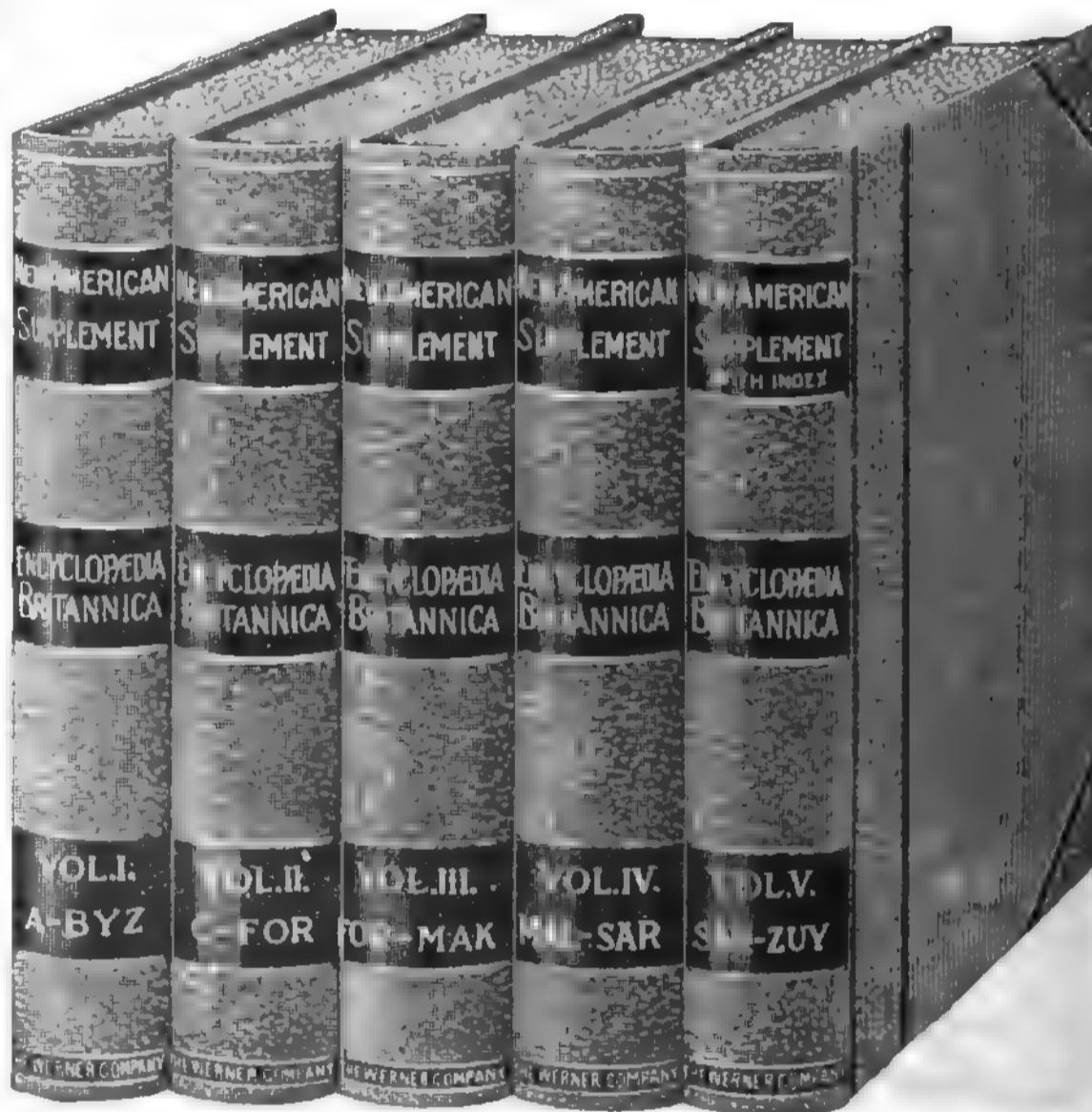
What Americans want to know about America and Americans.

New Five Volume Supplement

Added to the
25 Volume Edition of the

Encyclopædia Britannica

This work, the latest great achievement in modern bookmaking, should be owned by every one who has previously bought the 25 volume edition of the Britannica. The Supplement is thoroughly American, and makes the complete set of 30 volumes the greatest work of reference in the world. For those who own some other Encyclopædia this 5 volume Supplement will prove a great addition, as it provides a work of reference down to the present time. It's the "last word" on everything.



The new work is the result of years of active research, and is the natural outgrowth of the demand of the American public for a more adequate treatment in a work of reference of purely American subjects. The aims that have been sought are to supplement the Britannica so as to bring all the developments of history, discovery, arts, and sciences down to date; to extend biography so as to include living men of distinction; to enlarge the view of American interests, and to supply references to the original texts, making the whole work available for easy consultation.

The work was entrusted to Dr. Day Otis Kellogg, an editor, who had spent twelve years in the study of the Britannica, about whom was gathered an office staff of twenty and a special staff of sixty-seven persons, including heads of bureaus in Washington army and navy officers, eminent theologians, college presidents and professors, women at the head of the best managed reforms, educators, statesmen, and specialists. The result is a credit to American enterprise.

HOW and WHY

the Supplement was made is interestingly told in "A Story of American Enterprise," which will

be mailed on request either by the Educational Departments of THE NEW YORK TIMES or THE CHICAGO RECORD, through whom this great work will hereafter be sold.

MAY BE HAD ON FAVORABLE TERMS:

The whole work of 30 volumes, or the 5 volume New American Supplement, can be had on the most favorable terms (cash or deferred payments), in cloth, sheep, or half morocco binding, by addressing THE EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT of

ONE OF MANY.

H. W. McKNIGHT, D.D., LL. D., President Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, Pa. (Feb. 5, 1897).

"In the preparation of your 'Supplement' you have rendered a most valuable service to all owners and users of the Encyclopædia Britannica. By bringing it down to date you have renewed and prolonged its serviceableness and worth. You are to be congratulated upon the care and success with which you have done this work."

The New York Times.

5 and 7 East 16th St., NEW YORK.

(if you live east of Ohio.)

THE CHICAGO RECORD.
179 Madison Street, CHICAGO.

(if you live west of Ohio.)

CHILDREN TEETHING

For Children while Cutting their Teeth.

AN OLD
AND
WELL-TRIED REMEDY

FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup

has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING, with PERFECT SUCCESS. It SOOTHES the CHILD, SOFTENS the GUMS, ALLAYS all PAIN, CURES WIND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHŒA. Sold by Druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup,
and take no other kind.

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A BOTTLE.



WHITE ROSE
TRADE MARK No. 4711
GLYCERINE SOAP

Upheld by Beautiful Women Everywhere as the finest, most delicately perfumed and purest Toilet Soap manufactured. Always ask for and insist upon having "No. 4711" White Rose Glycerine Soap. Transparent as Crystal.

MÜLHENS & KROPPF, New York,
U. S. Agents.



OMO DRESS SHIELDS

Do just what is required of them — shield the dress from perspiration. Some dress shields do more—they give out an offensive odor. Others are heavy, cumbersome. OMO Dress Shields will outwear either rubber or stockinet shields, are absolutely odorless and lighter by half.

Trial pair 25c.
OMOMFG. CO.
894 Canal Street,
New York.

1897 High Grade Bicycles



for Men, Women, Girls & Boys. Complete line at lowest prices ever quoted.

\$100 'Oakwood'	for \$45.00
\$85 'Arlington'	" \$37.50
\$55 " "	" \$25.00
\$20 Bicycle	" \$10.75

\$75 'Maywood' Simplest, Strongest Bicycle on Earth " \$32.00
Fully guaranteed. Shipped anywhere C.O.D. with privilege to examine. No money in advance. Buy direct from manufacturers, save agents and dealers profits. Large illustrated catalogue free. Address (in full),
Cash Buyers' Union, 162 W. Van Buren St. B 199 Chicago

EARN A BICYCLE



600 Second Hand Wheels. All Makes. GOOD AS NEW. \$5 to \$15.
New High Grade '96 models, fully guaranteed, \$17 to \$25.
Special Clearing Sale.
Ship anywhere on approval.

We will give a responsible agent in each town free use of sample wheel to introduce them. Our reputation is well known throughout the country.

Write at once for our special offer.

S. J. MEAD CYCLE CO., Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

Vim BICYCLES



Special Bargains. Good Agents Wanted. Catalog FREE. **Vim Cycle Company**
331-347 Wabash Ave., Chicago

Look at your face.

Pimples, Freckles, Blackheads, Blotches, Rough, Oily Skin, Redness, and all facial blemishes positively cured by Dr. Campbell's Safe Arsenic Complexion Wafers and Fould's Arsenic Soap. These two peerless beautifiers brighten and clear the complexion as no other remedies on earth can. Wafers by mail, \$1; six boxes, \$5. Soap, 50c. Address, H. B. FOULD, Room 8, 214 Sixth Ave., N. Y.

Columbia
BICYCLES



Each New Season emphasizes the fact that the Columbia belongs to the limited and distinguished class of great mechanical creations. Why not get the best. POPE MFG. CO., Hartford, Conn. Send 2 cent Stamp for Catalogue.

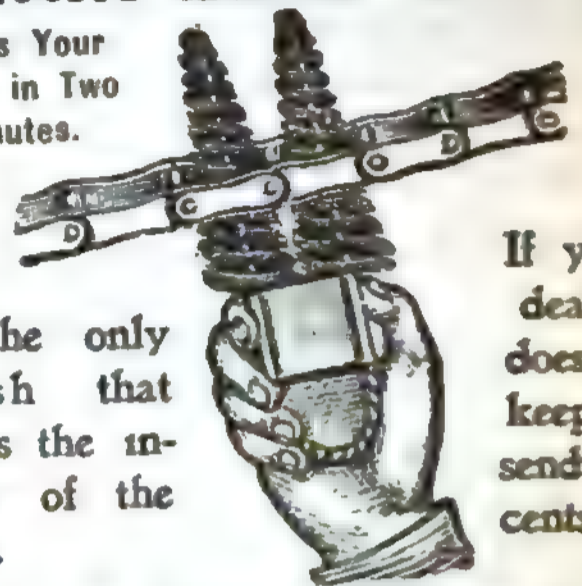
STANDARD OF THE WORLD.
\$100. TO ALL ALIKE

"HARTFORDS, \$60, \$55, \$50, \$45."

A Boon to Cyclists.

BURNIP'S (Patent)
CHAIN-LINK BRUSH

Cleans Your Chain in Two Minutes.



The only brush that cleans the interior of the links.

If your dealer does not keep it, send 50 cents to

L. H. LEADAM, Agent,
81 Pine Street, New York.
Kindly mention this publication.

GODEY'S MAGAZINE

FOR JULY.

Special Mid-Summer Number.

This number commences the 135th Volume of this famous magazine—the oldest in America. Some of the special features of this issue are:—

WOMEN WRITERS OF CANADA.

Illustrated with portraits. Containing interesting facts never before published.

IN QUIET CANYONS. By Idah M. Stobridge.

A beautiful word painting, illustrated by fine photographs

NOTABLE COLORED WOMEN. By Fannie B. Williams.

Illustrated with portraits of handsome women of the colored race. A strong and timely article, full of suggestions. With this appears "A Tale of the New South," which touches a grave social question.

CULTIVATION OF WILD FLOWERS.

Suggesting how any one may add these flowers to his garden.

Grace MacGowan Cooke contributes a bright and breezy Love Story, and there are other pieces of strong Fiction.

On all News Stands. 10 cts. a copy; \$1.00 a year.

THE GODEY COMPANY, NEW YORK.

Puritana

Makes the

Heart Right,
Lungs Right,
Liver Right,
Blood Right,
Kidneys Right,
Nerves Right,

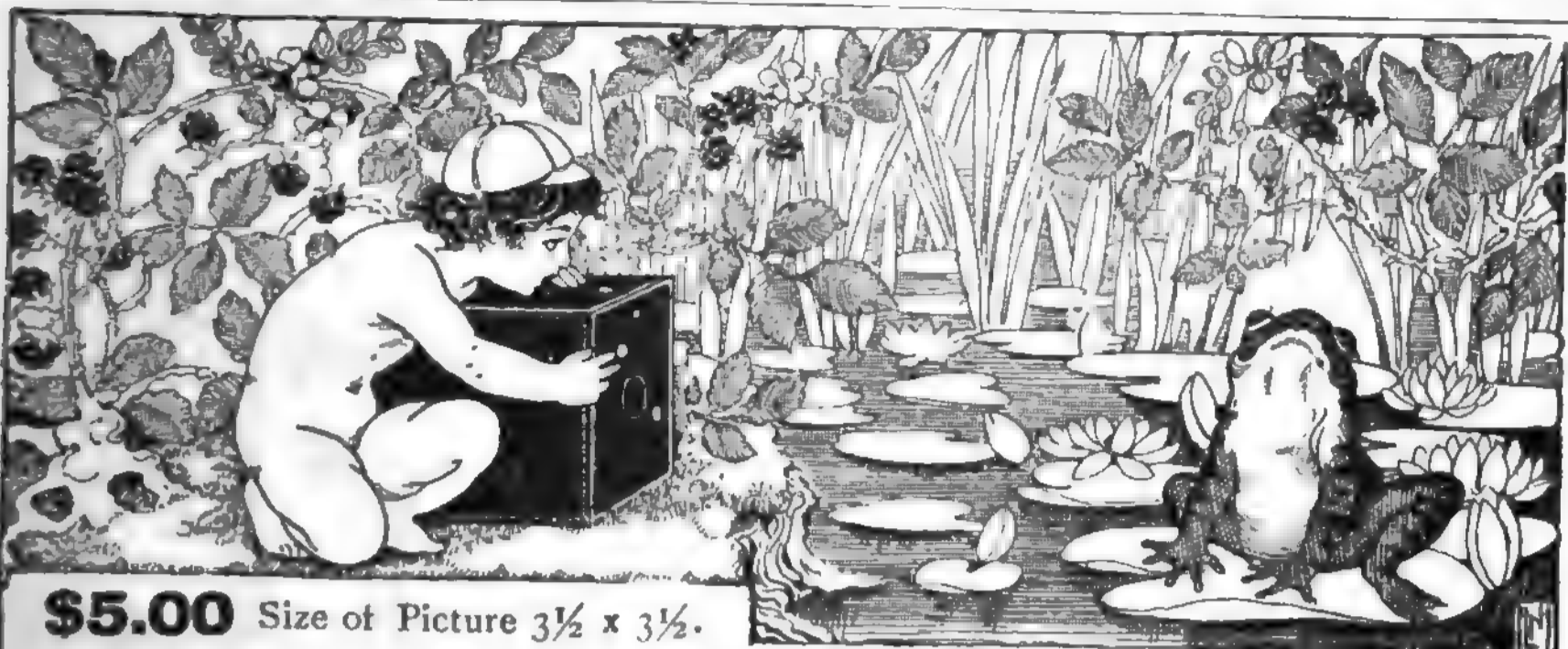
Because it makes

A Right Stomach.



It cures from head to foot.

Get of your druggist this great disease-conquering discovery (the price is \$1 for the complete treatment, one bottle of Puritana, one bottle of Puritana Pills, and one bottle of Puritana Tablets, all in one package), and you will bless the day when you heard of Puritana. Send us your name and address for our free booklet. The Puritana Compound Co., Concord, N. H.



\$5.00 Size of Picture $3\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$.

THE "QUAD" CAMERA.

The only *Complete* and *Reliable* Camera in the world for \$5.00. Send 2 cent stamp, for sample picture and catalog, to **EDWARD G. CONE, 818 Champlain Building, Chicago.**

2 Leading Novels 2

By Beatrice Harraden.
5th 1,000
Hilda Strafford

A California Story. By BEATRICE HARRADEN, author of "Ships that Pass in the Night." With Illustrations by Eric Pope. 12mo, cloth, \$1.25.

This is the first novel Miss Harraden has written since her memorable "Ships that Pass in the Night." It is a story of Californian Life. Miss Harraden has constructed a tragic tale of vivid power and fresh interest.

By PAUL L. FORD.
6th 1,000
The Great 'K. & A.' Train Robbery.

By PAUL LEICESTER FORD, author of "The Honorable Peter Stirling," "The Story of an Untold Love," etc., etc. 12mo, cloth, with frontispiece, \$1.25.

A novel that is admirable reading, for it is sure to rouse the interest of the most listless reader, and to keep him on tenter-hooks to the happy ending, when all the mystery and complications are satisfactorily settled. It is bound to be widely and appreciatively read.

The above Books are for sale by all Booksellers, or will be sent to readers of THE BLACK CAT, on receipt of their retail price, by the Publishers.

DODD, MEAD & CO.,

140-151 Fifth Ave., New York.

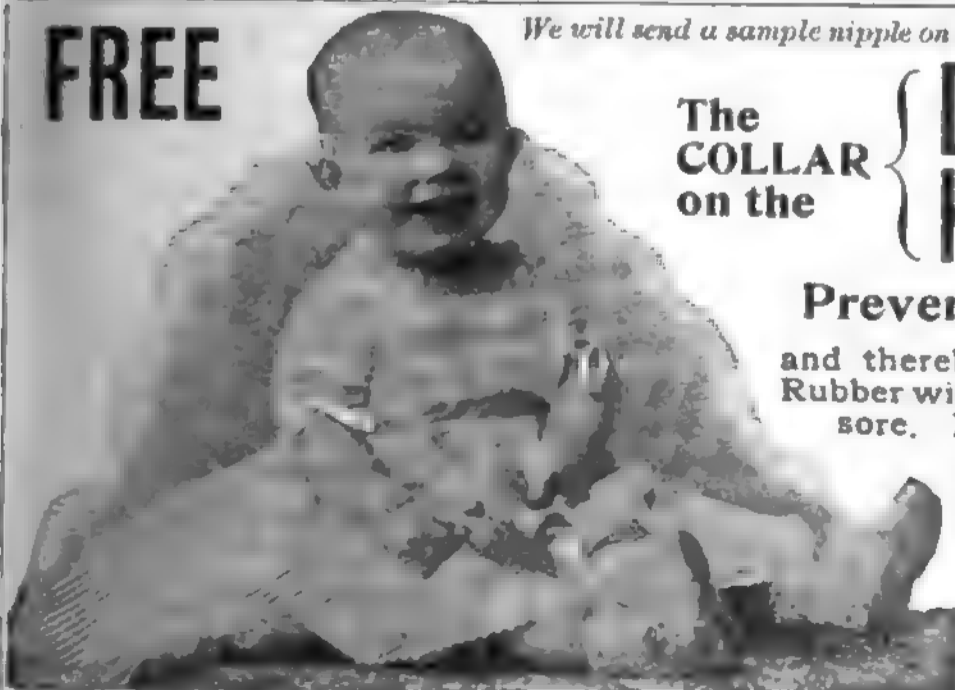
FREE! A HUGE OFFER! NO LOTTERY! NO CATCHWORD CONTEST!



Our world-renowned Electric Gold and Venezuelan Diamond Rings. The stones are superb crystals, luminously lustrous, beautiful in their brilliance, and can be compared side by side with the Real Gems, defying the detection of Diamond Experts. Electric Gold is the same Rich color throughout and is equal to and more durable than genuine 18 Karat. For size of finger cut hole in card. Ladies' and Gent's sizes. **HOW TO SECURE THE RING.**—Re-arrange the following puzzle words so as to represent three of the largest cities, one in the United States, one in England and one in France. 1. WNE RYOK. 2. OLNNOU. 3. IPRAN. Copy those you find on a piece of paper, and return to us with 10c. silver, or 12c. stamps, and we will give you the beautiful ring described. We make this astonishing offer to introduce our complete portfolio of vocal music entitled "Songs of the Century." This is a melange of the best vocal and instrumental melody. This selection (EMBRACING 77 SONGS, EACH WITH COMPLETE WORDS AND MUSIC FOR PIANO OR ORGAN) includes touching ballads, dear to the harmony of every home; standard songs of a patriotic order; fashionable parlor ditties; plantation warblings; and popular sonnets of leading American and European comic opera and music hall artists. Only think, the collection contains 77 songs, such as "Dream On," "Speak to me," "The Brave Old Oak," "Baby Mine," "Darling, Good Night," "Nancy Lee," "Comrades," "Let Me Dream Again," "Little Annie Rooney," and other vocal gems, such as, "My Dad's the Engineer," "McGinty's

Living Pictures," "Sidewalks of New York," "My Beautiful Irish Maid," "Just Tell Them That You Saw Me," "And Her Golden Hair Was Hanging Down Her Back."—ALL THESE and MANY MORE Catchy, Popular, Up-To-Date SONGS. If you are fond of music and singing, here is a grand chance. This is a bonus side offer, made by a thoroughly reliable house, to introduce its other specialties. Show this to your friends. Remember, that upon receipt of your order with 10c. silver, or 12c. stamps, with answers to above puzzles, we will send you a complete copy of "Songs of the Century," and as an ABSOLUTELY FREE present to introduce our goods the handsome ring Described Above. The songs alone are worth more to anyone of musical tastes than five times the amount. **CUT THIS OUT** and send today, as this is only a limited offer. **METROPOLITAN BOOK CO., 9 Murray St., New York.**

FREE



We will send a sample nipple on receipt of two-cent stamp for postage.

The COLLAR on the

Davidson Health Nipple

Prevents COLLAPSE

and thereby COLIC. The pure Para Rubber will not make the baby's mouth sore. If you cannot obtain them of your druggist, take no other, but send 6c. to us for a sample dozen.



Patent No. 48.

DAVIDSON RUBBER CO.

22 Milk Street, - - Boston, Mass.

Established 40 years.

Complete Catalogue of Rubber Goods Free.

HERE COMES MY BOTTLE.

Marion Harland's
New Department

"Afternoon Tea"

An Attractive
Feature.

THE HOUSEWIFE

The Most Practical and Most Helpful Household Publication in America.

THE HOUSEWIFE will, in the future as in the past, continue its successful mission of teaching "Young housekeepers who do not know enough," and "Older ones who do not know too much," the best ways for doing everything that is right and proper for them to do in the upbuilding of the home, which is practically the upbuilding of the Nation.

THE HOUSEWIFE is a 20-page magazine to which the leading writers of America are contributors, it is handsomely illustrated and well printed.

Among the contributors to THE HOUSEWIFE may be found the following names:—
Mary E. Wilkins, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Maria Parloa, Kate Upson Clark, Rose Hawthorn Lathrop, Harriet Prescott Spofford, Amanda M. Douglas, Julia Schayer, Mary Kyle Dallas, Mrs. John Sherwood, Juliet Corson, Mary A. Denison, Helen M. Winslow, Mary F. Butts, Helen Campbell, Eva Lovett Carson, Lucy C. Lillie, Emma C. Hewitt, Alice Chittenden, Eliza R. Parker, Helen T. Clarke, Eleanor M. Lucas, Margret Holmes Bates, Mary Lowe Dickinson, Florence B. Hallowell, Christine Terhune Herrick, and Annie Hamilton Donnell.

In order to secure New Subscribers we will send THE HOUSEWIFE until January, 1898, for only thirty-five cents, together with the

Diamond Collection of 600 Songs,

With Words and Music of Each.

EVERY ONE A GEM, among which are the following:—

Annie Laurie.
Auld Lang Syne.
Aileen Mavourneen.
A Life on the Ocean Wave.
A Man's a Man for a' that.
Bridget Donahue.
Black-Eyed Susan.
Bridesmaid's Chorus.
Behold, the Morn is Breaking.
Come Home, Father.
Comin' thro' the Rye.
Come rest in this Bosom.
Columbia, Gem of the Ocean.
Caller Herrin'
Don't Forget to Write.
Do they Think of me at Home?
Dreaming of Home.
Ever of Thee.
Forget and Forgive.
Home so Blest.
Hail Columbia.
I'll Pray for Thee.
I'll be True to Thee.
In the Starlight.
In the Gloaming.
I cannot Sing the Old Songs.
Killarney.
Keep a Hammering.

Kind Words can Never Die.
Light of other Days.
My Country.
Maid of Athens.
Marseilles Hymn.
My Little Wife and I.
My Bible Leads to Glory.
My Mother's Portrait.
My Dear Old Wife and I.
Make me no Gaudy Chaplet.
Mother Watch the Little Feet.
Nancy Lee.
Nothing True but Heaven.
O Fair Dove.
Old Grimes.
O Joy, O Day of Joy.
Oft in the Stilly Night.
O, Dear, What Can the Matter
be.
Pulling Hard against the Stream.
Rock a bye Baby.
Speak to Me.
Sweet Annie.
Speed Away.
Sweet Home.
Sing, Darkies, Sing.
Star of Bethlehem.
Solomon's Temple.

'Tis Better So.
The Bridge.
The Watermill.
Take Back the Heart.
The One Dear Face.
The Danube River.
The Family Bible.
The Old Arm Chair.
The Sweetest Hours.
The Little Fisher Maiden.
The Battle Cry of Freedom.
'Tis the Last Rose of Summer.
The Star-spangled Banner.
Where was Moses?
With Joy My Heart?
We Never Speak as We Pass By.
What Rouse You're Gwine to
Take for Zion?
When Mother Puts the Little
Ones to Bed.
When I Can Read My Title.
Woodman, Spare That Tree.
When the Swallows Homeward
Fly.
When the Corn is Waving,
Annie.
Freedom, God and Right.
And 520 others.

The Best of the Old and the Pick of the New.

Similar books containing a less number of songs are sold for fifty cents; but we send this splendid collection by mail, postpaid, together with THE HOUSEWIFE until January, 1898, for only **thirty-five cents**. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Remit by Post-office or Express Money Order or in postage stamps. Address,

THE A. D. PORTER CO., Publishers, 28 Reade St., New York.

Uric Acid Poison

Slays Its Thousands.

URIC ACID POISON results from the accumulation and deposition of Uric Acid or its Salts in the system. This Poison is generally slow in action, but at times sudden and fatal in effect. It causes Gout, Rheumatism, Stone of the Kidney or Bladder, Bright's Disease, Neuralgic Affections, Nervous Prostration, Eczema, Dyspepsia, etc., etc. In women, under some conditions, this Poison shows itself in Swellings, Dropsical Effusion, Uræmic Coma and Convulsions, and often makes its appearance during and especially after Scarlet and Typhoid Fevers.

BUFFALO LITHIA WATER

A POWERFUL ANTIDOTE.

This water dissolves and eliminates from the system any deposition of Uric Acid or its Salts, and is a GREAT NATURAL SPECIFIC for these conditions and all others caused by Uric Acid Poison. Taken as a common beverage or table water, it acts as a PREVENTIVE of the accumulation and deposition of Uric Acid or its Salts, and of all maladies consequent upon such deposition and accumulation. The claim here made for this water is abundantly and emphatically attested by medical men who are regarded as authority wherever medical science is known.

BUFFALO LITHIA WATER

Springs open for guests June 15 to Oct. 1.

is for sale by Grocers and Druggists generally. Pamphlets on application.

PROPRIETOR, Buffalo Lithia Springs, Va.

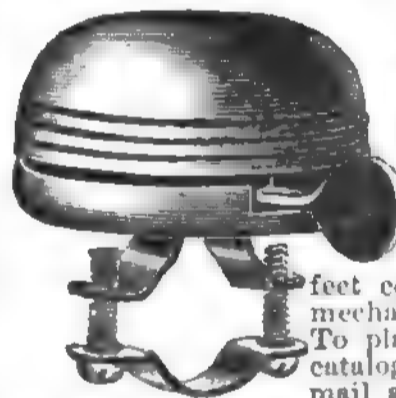


PERPETUAL DATER 25c.

ALL your letters, bills, and papers should be DATED! This Dater adjusts to ANY desired date INSTANTLY and will save you time, money, and trouble. It is Rapid, Legible, and costs practically nothing. To present you our catalogue of 3,000 specialties with a specimen BARGAIN we will send this dater postpaid for **ONLY 25c.** 3 for 60c.; \$2.00 a dozen.

CONSECUTIVE NUMBERER, numbers from 1 to 10,000, same price. **YOU NEED BOTH!** AGENTS WANTED.

ELECTRIC STROKE BELL, 25c.



The cheapest electric stroke Bicycle Bell and the greatest bargain ever offered. Pure bell metal banded gong; loud, clear ring. Perfect continuous ringing mechanism. Regular price, 60c. To place a sample and our great catalogue in consumers' hands, we mail a sample for **ONLY 25**

CENTS. Send 5 cents extra for postage. AGENTS WANTED.

Send a postal for our Spring Catalogue of 1,000 Big Bargains.

ROBT. H. INGERSOLL & BROTHER, 65 Cortlandt Street, Dept. 156, N. Y. CITY.

Watch and Chain

For One Day's Work.



We send this Nickel-Plated Watch, Chain, and Charm to Boys and Girls for selling 1½ dozen packages of BLUINE at 10c. each. Send your full address by return mail and we will forward the Bluine, postpaid, and a large Premium List.

No money required. We send the Bluine at our own risk. You go among your neighbors and sell it. Send us the money that you get for it and we send you the Watch, Chain, and Charm, prepaid.

This is an American Watch, Nickel-Plated Case, Open Face, Heavy Beveled Crystal. It is Guaranteed to Keep Accurate Time, and with proper care should last Ten Years.



Bluine Company,

Box 75, Concord Junction, Mass.

SHORT STORIES

of **hunting** and **fishing** experiences; sketches of **travel** in foreign lands; papers on **cycling**, **golf**, **cricket**, and **baseball**; sea yarns; athletic news and records, are the features of



which give it a welcome in every home where magazines are read.

Each issue contains something of interest to you and every member of your household.

If you devote your recreation hours to any of the outdoor pastimes, you cannot afford to miss an issue.

To those who are tied too closely to the busy world, and have not the leisure for cycling expeditions, coaching parties, yacht cruises, or an afternoon now and then on the cricket field, the golf links, or the tennis court, the reading of the doings of others will charm many an evening hour.

Each department of sport is edited by one fully qualified to write on his favorite pastime.

The illustrations of sporting scenes are always correct in detail, and veritable gems of the illustrator's art.



FICTION

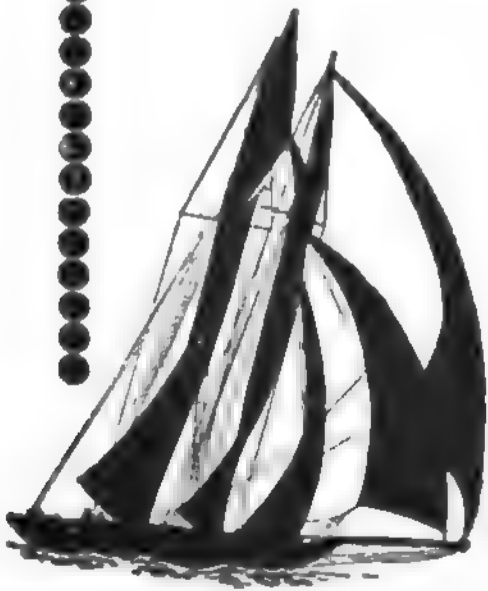
usually of an outdoor character, has a place in every number.



Send a 2 cent stamp

for a sample copy of the foremost magazine in its field.

25 cents a copy \$3.00 a year.



**THE OUTING
PUBLISHING CO.**

**239 FIFTH AVENUE,
NEW YORK.**



WHO
opened that bottle of
HIRES
Rootbeer?

The popping of a cork from a bottle of Hires is a signal of good health and pleasure. A sound the old folks like to hear---the children can't resist it.

HIRES
Rootbeer

(CARBONATED)

is composed of the very ingredients the system requires. Aiding the digestion, soothing the nerves, purifying the blood. A temperance drink for temperance people. Put up in pint bottles already for drinking except for the cooling.

Sold by all dealers by the bottle and in cases of two dozen pints. See that the signature *Charles E. Hires* is on each bottle.

A package of HIRES Rootbeer extract makes 5 gallons. Sold as formerly by all dealers.

THE CHARLES E. HIRES CO., Philadelphia.



ARE YOU TOO FAT



If so, why not reduce your weight and be comfortable? Obesity predisposes to Heart Trouble, Paralysis, Liver Diseases, Constipation, Rheumatism, Apoplexy, etc. and is not only dangerous, but extremely annoying to people of refined taste. It's a mistake not to reduce your weight, if too great. We do not care how many reduction remedies you may have taken without success, we have a treatment that will reduce weight, as thousands can testify. It is simple, safe, pleasant to take, and not expensive. The following are a few of thousands who have been reduced in weight and greatly improved in health by its use:

Mrs. HELEN WEBER,
Marietta, Ohio, says:
"It reduced me 30 pounds, and improved my health wonderfully."

Mrs. I. Spalding	- - - - -	Morrisville, Vt.	- - - - -	61 lbs
Miss M. Nobles	- - - - -	Racine, Wis.	- - - - -	54 lbs
Mrs. M. Check	- - - - -	Valley Mills, Texas	- - - - -	74 lbs
H. Rossette	- - - - -	Oro, Cal.	- - - - -	85 lbs
Ellen Ridgeway	- - - - -	Vandalia, Iowa	- - - - -	60 lbs

Mr. C. E. Purdue,	Springfield, Ill.	- - - - -	135 lbs
Mrs. M. M. Cummins,	Ottawa, Ill.	- - - - -	78 lbs
Miss M. Holsington,	Lake View, Mich.	- - - - -	50 lbs

We will give **\$100 IN GOLD** to any one who can prove that any of our testimonials are not genuine.

DON'T do anything or take anything until you hear from us; we have something important to tell you about how to **MAKE REMEDY AT HOME** at a trifling cost, and also other valuable information. To any reader of this paper who will write to us at once we will send full particulars and a few days'

TREATMENT FREE

in a plain sealed package upon receipt of 4 cents to cover postage, etc. Correspondence strictly confidential.

HALL & CO., K. A. Box 404, St. Louis, Mo.

THE... ADIRONDACK..... MOUNTAINS

Called in Old Times
"The Great North Woods."

A marvelous wilderness, abounding in beautiful lakes, rivers, and brooks, filled with the greatest variety of fish. An immense extent of primeval forest, where game of all kinds is to be found.

This wonderful region—located in Northern New York—is reached from Chicago by all lines in connection with the New York Central; from St. Louis by all lines in connection with the New York Central; from Cincinnati by all lines in connection with the New York Central; from Montreal by the New York Central; from Boston by a through car over the Boston & Albany, in connection with the New York Central; from New York by the through car lines of the New York Central; from Buffalo and Niagara Falls by the New York Central.

A 32-page folder and map entitled "The Adirondack Mountains and How to Reach Them" sent free, postpaid, to any address, on receipt of a 1-cent stamp by George H. Daniels, General Passenger Agent, New York Central & Hudson River Railroad, Grand Central Station, New York.

Authors' Agency.

SIXTH YEAR. Advice, Criticism, Revision, Copying, Disposal. Book and all other MS. thoroughly prepared for the press. References: Noah Brooks, W. D. Howells, Charles Dudley Warner, and many others.

For rates, references, notices, send stamp to **WILLIAM A. DRESSER, Director,**

88 Pierce Building, Copley Square, Boston, Mass.
(Opp. Public Library.)
Mention *The Black Cat*.

Study Law at Home

Instruction by mail, adapted to every one. Methods approved by leading educators. Experienced and competent instructors. Takes spare time only. Three courses—Preparatory, business, college. An opportunity to better your condition and prospects. Students and graduates everywhere. Seven years of success. Full particulars free.



SPRAGUE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL OF LAW
158 Telephone Building, DETROIT, MICH.

MENNEN'S BORATED TALCUM TOILET POWDER



Approved by Highest Medical Authorities as a Perfect Sanitary Toilet Preparation

for Infants and Adults. Delightful after Shaving. Positively relieves Prickly Heat, Nettle Rash, Chafes

Skin, Sunburn, etc. Removes Blotches, Pimples, makes the skin smooth and healthy. Take no substitutes. Sold by druggists or mailed for 25 cts.

Sample Mailed (Name this paper) **FREE**
CERHARD MENNEN CO., Newark, N. J.

What May Be Done in 48 Hours

First 18 Hours

Sail at 3 P. M. (Saturdays, 4 P. M.) from Pier 26, N. R., upon one of the handsome and modern **Old Dominion Liners** for Old Point Comfort or Virginia Beach.

Next 10 Hours

Arrive Old Point Comfort 10 A. M., Virginia Beach at noon. Stop at one of the luxurious hotels, visit historic points of interest or a bath in the surf, and leave that evening on **Old Dominion Liner** for New York.

Final 20 Hours

Upon the Ocean, enjoying the tonic and rest of the most delightful of all sea trips. Arrive at Old Dominion Wharf early in afternoon.

What it Will Cost

The entire cost, including meals and stateroom accommodations both ways, and board at hotels while ashore **\$17.00**

Send for illustrated literature and particulars.

Old Dominion S. S. Co.,

W. L. GUILLAUMEU, Pier 26, N. R., New York.
Vice-President and Traffic Mgr.



PERFECTION IN BREWING
IS REACHED IN AMERICA



ASK FOR "PABST"

Take Up the Slack. The human body in the heat of summer may be likened to a ship in a dead calm; she cannot make port without the little tug-boat, which, catching her by her loose cable pulls gently, but gradually, and taking up the slack brings her safely to the dock.

The nerves, the muscles, and the mind in summer are at the slack of their cables, yet the cares of household or business may increase. That famous little tug,

PABST MALT EXTRACT, The "Best" Tonic

takes right hold of the loosened ropes, gently gives new action and vitality, and draws one through the critical months to fresh and vibrant life. Cool, foaming, and full of rejuvenating influences, it makes the relaxed forces taut and strong.

Pabst Malt Extract is The "Best" Tonic.

PERRY'S VICTORY

BIRNER CHICAGO

The largest clientele of intelligent, thoughtful readers reached by any periodical, Daily, Weekly, or Monthly, in the world during 1896 was that of the

Cosmopolitan Magazine.

....During 1897....

An Important Series of Papers on the Conduct of Great Business Operations.

THE COSMOPOLITAN will present a valuable series of *papers on the great industries and more important operations of finance and business*. They will be from the pens of men thoroughly familiar with the subjects of which they write. No business man, however high his place in the financial world, or humble

his commercial life, but will find interesting and instructive material in this series. It will constitute a very complete course of business training, and every young man just entering commercial life, and every old man, however experienced, will alike find it of value. The first of the series is in the March number, on

"The Methods of Banking,"

by THOMAS L. JAMES, formerly Postmaster-General, many years president of the Lincoln National Bank. This paper is illustrated by portraits of twelve of the leading bankers of New York, taken for THE COSMOPOLITAN in their bank offices by flash-light.

Julian Hawthorne Goes to India to Investigate Plague, Famine, and British Rule for the Cosmopolitan.

Mr. Julian Hawthorne is on his way to India, as commissioner for THE COSMOPOLITAN, to investigate the famine and plague now desolating that land. India is the least known of the populous countries of the earth, and it is worth while sending there an American with an established reputation for fairness and sincerity, who will paint in his own graphic style, the actual condition of affairs.

**The New Story
The War of the Worlds
By Wells—to begin in April
Cosmopolitan.**

If Du Maurier had not chosen "The Martians" as his last title, that would have been the name of the new story of Mr. H. G. Wells, to be begun in the April COSMOPOLITAN. "The War of the Worlds" is one of the most brilliant pieces of imagination ever put in words. Swift and Poe, Jules Verne and Flam-

marion have all been left behind by the boldness of this new conception of Mr. Wells. Mars, growing cold through the ages, the fight for life on that planet has developed the intelligence of its people to acuteness many centuries in advance of the inhabitants of our globe. They determine to migrate and seize upon our warmer soil. England is the point at which they arrive, and the interest is intense from the first to the closing chapter.

Does Modern College Education Educate in the Broadest and most Liberal Sense of the Term?

What is probably the most important discussion of the educational question ever held will be opened in the April COSMOPOLITAN. President Gilman of The Johns Hopkins University will follow the introductory article, and the leading educators of the day will contribute articles upon this most important inquiry:

"Does Modern Education Educate in the Broadest and Most Liberal Sense of the Term?" If you are at all interested in the instruction of youth, either as teacher or parent, you cannot afford to miss this remarkable symposium, intended to review the mistakes of the nineteenth century, and signalize the entrance of the twentieth by advancing the cause of education. President Dwight of Yale, President Schurman of Cornell, Bishop Potter, and President Morton are among those who have already agreed to contribute to what promises to be the most important series of educational papers ever printed. The aim is to consider existing methods in the light of the requirements of the life of to-day, and this work has never been undertaken on a scale in any degree approaching that outlined for THE COSMOPOLITAN. On all News Stands. Price, 10 cents, \$1.00 a year.



THIS STANDARD
Roll-Top Desk, \$15

Freight prepaid to any point in the United States East of Denver, Col.

Desk is **Solid Oak** and measures 50 ins. long, 30 ins. deep, 45 ins. high. Mounted on casters; drawers and closet below writing bed. Pigeon-hole case is overhung same as all high-priced desks, and contains: 2 medium-sized drawers, 2 racks for pens, pencils, etc., 2 memorandum strips for cards, blotters, 2 extension leaves.

Entire desk locks automatically without a key, when top is rolled down, by means of a spring lock—one key unlocks entire desk.

JOSEPH L. SHOEMAKER & CO.

Salesrooms: 922 ARCH ST., Philadelphia, Penn.

Send 2 cent stamp for Catalogue.

RIDE A
MONARCH
AND KEEP IN FRONT.

MONARCH CYCLE MFG CO. CHICAGO.
NEW-YORK ——— LONDON

STUDY LAW AT HOME.
Faculty composed of members of Chicago Bar. Thorough Course, leading to degree. Prepares you for admission to the Bar or Business. Catalogue Free.
CHICAGO CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL OF LAW.
Dept. M. Reaper Block, Chicago.

DYSPEPSIA, INDIGESTION,
HEART-BURN,
and all Stomach Troubles quickly relieved and cured by **FLORAPLEXION.** Sample bottle free by mail. Every drop is worth its weight in gold when you need it. Address Franklin Hart 92 John St., New York.

ALL LOVERS of original, fascinating stories—stories that are stories—should at once send us 50 cents for a full year's subscription to **THE BLACK CAT**, and thus make sure of receiving the \$2,600 prize stories, the publication of which begins in this issue. Address, The Shortstory Publishing Co., Boston, Mass

\$100
to
\$1,000
To Story Tellers.

We will pay \$100 to \$1,000 cash each for really clever, original, *unusual* short stories for publication in **THE BLACK CAT**.

We want stories of from 2,000 to 5,000 words, with new plots, new incidents, and new situations, so fascinating throughout and so interestingly told as to delight intelligent people anywhere. All manuscripts are judged solely upon their merits, the name or reputation of a writer receiving no consideration whatever; and payment in each case is made, not according to length, but according to the merits of a story as a story.

We particularly desire tales of 2,500 words or less, and such as present every-day subjects of universal interest in a humorous, cheerful, or touching manner, rather than those that deal with the unnatural, weird, or uncanny. The Shortstory Publishing Co., Boston, Mass.

"The Black Cat publishes stories that ARE stories."—CHICAGO TIMES-HERALD.

"If you see it in The Black Cat it's a story that IS a story."—BALTIMORE AMERICAN.

The Black Cat Prize Stories. \$2,600.00

The result of the prize story contest announced by the publishers of THE BLACK CAT last November, and which closed March 31, is given below. Manuscripts were submitted from every State in the Union, Canada, Mexico, South America, Australia, India, England, and also the continent of Europe. Every story of the thousands received was judged solely on its merits, the name or reputation of a writer receiving no consideration whatever. The prize money was promptly paid by certified checks on the International Trust Co., Boston, Mass.

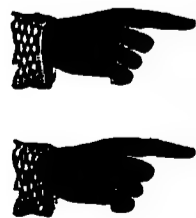
These are the successful contestants:—

1st Prize, \$1,000.	A Celestial Crime. Charles Stuart Pratt, Warner, N. H.
2d Prize, \$500.	"The Heart of God." Joanna E. Wood, Philadelphia, Pa.
3d Prize, \$300.	For Dear Old Yale. James Langston, New York, N. Y.
4th Prize, \$200.	Her Bare Foot. William C. Hudson, Fordham, New York, N. Y.
5th Prize.	<i>The following were deemed of equal merit, and instead of dividing the fifth prize, \$100 was awarded to each.</i>
\$100.	A Geometrical Design. Mary Foote Arnold, Terre Haute, Ind.
\$100.	Ezra Collingford's Figure 4 Trap. William Maynadier Browne, Readville, Mass.
\$100.	Sombre. John M. Ellicott, U. S. N., Mare Island, Calif.
\$100.	In the Cabin of the Ben Bolt. Bert Leston Taylor, Duluth, Minn.
\$100.	His Millionaire Client. Sallie Pate Steen, South Enid, Oklahoma.
\$100.	Melted Melody. James J. McEvilly, Washington, D. C.
Total, \$2,600.	

The publication of the above stories, which are not merely prize stories in name but **prize stories in fact**, begins in

This (July) Issue of The Black Cat.

THE BLACK CAT aims to publish the most fascinating stories that brains and genius can produce and money can buy. It publishes no continued stories, no translations, no borrowings, no stealings, and no stories that have nothing to recommend them except the name or reputation of their writers.



Any one who will send us 50 cents NOW (postage stamps will do) for a year's subscription to THE BLACK CAT, will receive, postpaid, monthly as issued, beginning with July, the 12 numbers, containing not only all of the above \$2,600 prize stories, but 55 other equally fascinating stories, costing over \$12,000. For \$1.00 received before August 15, we will send, postpaid, all back numbers, from October, 1895, to June, 1897—21 in all—and also mail monthly as issued one copy of THE BLACK CAT, from July, 1897, to December, 1898. This offer, which covers 3½ years' subscription at the price of 2 years, comprises over 200 of the cleverest stories ever told, all original, complete, and copyrighted.—costing nearly \$30,000, and published exclusively in THE BLACK CAT.

Address, THE SHORTSTORY PUBLISHING Co., 144 High Street, Boston, Mass.

Lippincott's Library
—OF—
Popular Fiction

CONTAINS AN

immense assortment of books by the most popular authors of the day, including

CAREY, CAMERON,

WISTER, etc., etc.

The volumes are well printed and attractively bound in uniform red cloth, gilt top.

Write for complete circular and price-list to the Publishers,

J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY,
715 and 717 Market Street,
PHILADELPHIA.



CARNRICK'S SOLUBLE FOOD

For Infants, Invalids, Convalescents, and Nursing Mothers.

It will be retained when the stomach rejects all other nourishment. Write for a FREE SAMPLE and

"Our Baby's First and Second Years,"

By MARION HARLAND.

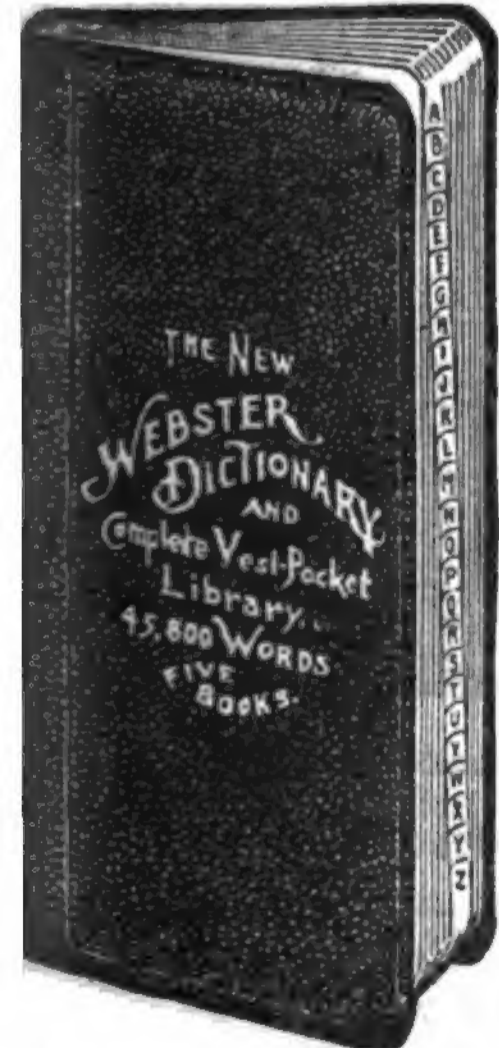
REED & CARNRICK, West Broadway and Prince St. NEW YORK.

A POCKET LIBRARY

For 25 CENTS.

Our little pocket dictionary and library is positively the handiest little work ever published. It excels in completeness and compactness everything of the sort ever published. It includes 45,000 words fully pronounced, A Pronouncing and Statistical Gazetteer of the World, A Complete and Reliable Parliamentary Manual, A Literary Guide and Letter Writer, Rules for Punctuation and Use of Capitals, A Summary of Etiquette, Golden Rule Briefs, Rapid Calculator, How to Compute Interest, Forms of Due Bills, Orders, Notes and Receipts and much other useful information. The book has the written endorsement of many educators and writers

of large reputation and is fast displacing in studies, schools and offices the bulky volumes which really contain no more information of any use. It is well bound, carefully indexed and can be carried in the best pocket. It is a great seller for agents. Send for sample. Prices by mail: Elegant Cloth, red edges, 25 cts.; Morocco, gold edges, very durable, 50 cts.; Extra Morocco, with calendar, memorandum and stamp holder, 60 cts. Address, L. N. CUSHMAN, Pub., 13, 15, 17 Otis St., Boston, Mass.



HALL'S

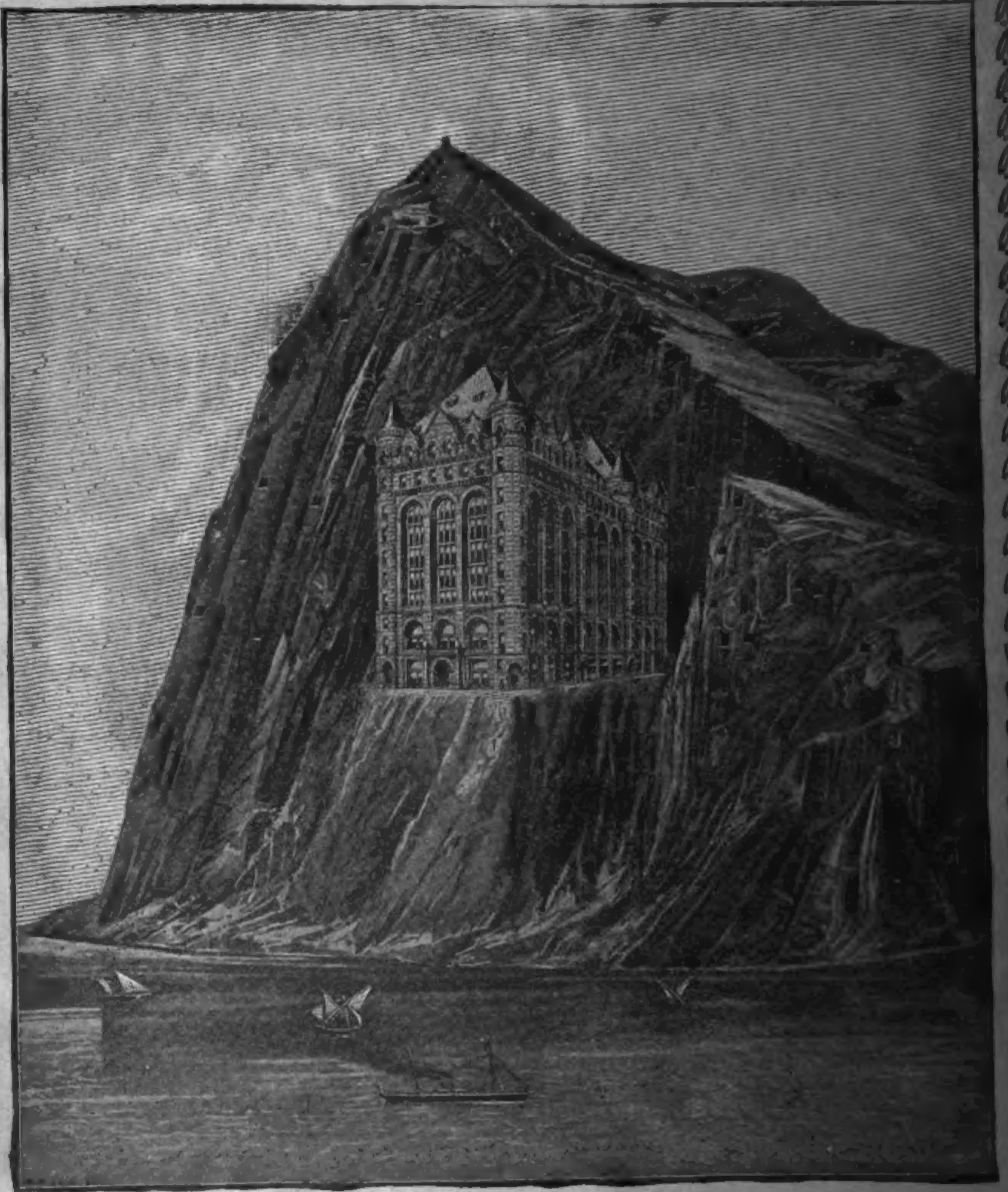
Vegetable Sicilian
HAIR RENEWER

Beautifies and restores Gray Hair to its original color and vitality; prevents baldness; cures itching and dandruff. A fine hair dressing.

R. P. HALL & CO., Props., Nashua, N. H.

SOLD BY ALL DRUGGISTS.

THE PRUDENTIAL HAS THE
Strength of Gibraltar



THE PRUDENTIAL Issues Life Insurance Policies for
MEN, WOMEN, and CHILDREN
\$50,000 to \$15

Under

PROFIT-SHARING POLICIES

Premiums payable yearly, half-yearly, quarterly, or weekly.

THE PRUDENTIAL INSURANCE COMPANY OF AMERICA

JOHN F. DRYDEN, President.

Home Office: Newark, N. J.

THE TWO *Sozodont* GIRLS

1857

1897



Familiar Faces These! As the "SOZODONT GIRL," one became widely known years ago, the other recently through the public prints. Both are types of dainty women with whom SOZODONT is the favorite dentifrice. Can you give us the correct name of either lady? If so, you may add the names of ten friends, to each of whom we will send a trial bottle of SOZODONT free of charge. In any event we will send you one.

Address P. O. Box 247, New York City.

HALL & RUCKEL, PROPRIETORS, NEW YORK, LONDON.

Please mention this number of THE BLACK CAT when you write.

MONDAY



USE IT

TUESDAY



EVERY =

= DAY

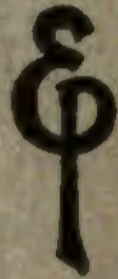
WEDNESDAY



IN THE

WEEK

THURSDAY



THEN

FRIDAY



REST

ON

SATURDAY



SUNDAY.

SUNDAY

